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CLASS
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THE STRAND MAGAZIN
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Strawberries and Cream

Make the most of the strawberry season while it lasts. There is no more delicious dish, the whole year round, than strawberries and cream.

Many people now serve Libby's Evaporated Milk with strawberries instead of cream. Used just as it comes from the tin, Libby's Evaporated Milk has the richness of cream at one fourth the cost.

Libby's Evaporated Milk used instead of cream is delightful with all fruits, whether cooked or raw.

Send for our free booklet, "Finer Flavoured Milk Dishes." It is full of recipes for delicious cream and butter saving dishes that will please the whole family.

Libby, McNeill & Libby, Ltd.
(DEPT. 1), LONDON, E.C.3

Libby's
Evaporated
MILK

Young at Sixty!

You've met jolly old couples like this yourself.

They're hale and hearty, rosy cheeked, eyes bright with twinkling kindliness. A cheery word for everyone, the friends and confidants of all they come in contact with.

Why? Why are they different from others of like age? Why are they active and cheery when other old folks are crippled with rheumatism and gout, old in manner and outlook?

Simply because they are healthy.

It is the same with young and old alike. If you are healthy you have the normal, healthy outlook of cheeriness on life. But keeping in the pink of health under modern conditions of life requires care on your part.

Just consider these facts: most of us get insufficient fresh air and not nearly enough active exercise.

Added to this there are the errors of diet, overwork, nervous strain, anxiety which are inseparable from modern life. All these conditions affect the system; the liver and kidneys are especially sensitive, and as a direct result they fail to perform their functions actively enough. This causes impurities to creep into the blood. Headaches, tiredness, slackness, sleepiness after meals, depression, rheumatism, and other ills follow.

Kruschen Salts should be your safeguard. Every morning put as much as will cover a sixpence in your breakfast cup of tea. The crystals are tasteless if taken this way.

Kruschen Salts tone up liver and kidneys so that the organs begin again to perform their functions actively, thoroughly. Restored to full efficiency, these organs do the work which Nature intends: they eliminate impurities from the blood. Clear refreshed blood courses tingling to every fibre of the body, bringing new life, new health, and new vigour to your whole system.

Kruschen Salts

Good Health for a farthing a day

Tasteless in Tea

Kruschen Salts cost 1/9 a bottle of 96 doses—less than a farthing a day for good health. The first chemist you see will have a bottle in stock: go in and get one.

Direct From Northampton

The World's Best Brogue at Barratts Reduced Factory Price

100 per cent. Brogue Efficiency.

For either sports or promenade wear. Soles of English oak-tanned butt hide, stitched to welts on hand-sewn principle and solid leather insoles; easy tread; smooth inner surface. Even-grained, substantial, flexible Black Box Calf uppers, with brogue ornament neatly punched and strongly sewn; can't break away across tread. Firm, non-slipping heel grip. Back quarters lined smooth leather. Stiffeners in blocked toe and heel are solid leather. Note the smart shape and appearance. A gentleman's shoe worn by well-dressed men all over the world.

BARRATTS use the word "best" to describe this Brogue shoe because it is a superlative product of the world's boot metropolis. Made at "Footshape" works, by Northampton's most skilful craftsmen, Barratts back it with an unreserved quality-guarantee. Content with one modest factory profit and selling by post, thus saving all superfluous middlemen's charges, Barratts price is 30 to 50 per cent. below shop prices.

"Footshape" Fitting By Post. When ordering, state usual size worn or send "Footshape," got by outlining stockinged foot as it rests with normal pressure on paper. Hold pencil upright. Sizes: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12—which is 1/- extra. Four widths: Narrow, Medium, Wide, and Extra Wide.

Direct by Post,

25/-

Post Free.

Postage Overseas Extra.

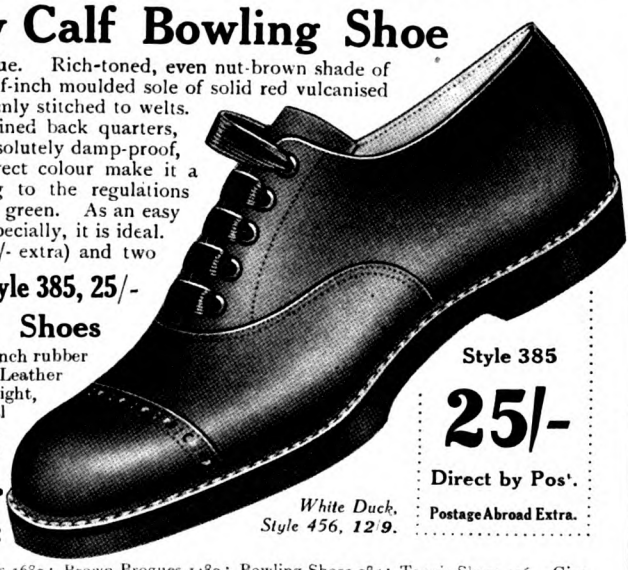
No. 1482 is same Shoe, Best Brown Willow Calf, Rich Tone 30/-

Black Style. No. 1682

Brown Willow Calf Bowling Shoe

A splendid example of Barratt value. Rich-toned, even nut-brown shade of luxuriously easy Willow Calf. Half-inch moulded sole of solid red vulcanised rubber, securely solutioned and firmly stitched to welts. Neatly punched toe-cap, leather-lined back quarters, perfect non-slip ankle-grip. Its absolutely damp-proof, wonderfully flexible soles and correct colour make it a perfect bowling shoe, conforming to the regulations which prohibit white shoes on the green. As an easy walking shoe, for overseas men especially, it is ideal. Made in all sizes 5 to 12 (size 12 1/- extra) and two widths to each size—"medium" and "wide."

Style 385, 25/-



White Duck Tennis Shoes

Best Bleached White Duck Canvas, ½-inch rubber soles, firmly solutioned and stitched. Leather stiffened toe-cap and heel-grip. Cool, light, and ideal wear for tennis or tropical climates. All sizes 5 to 12 (size 12 1/- extra), two widths. **Style 456, 12/9**

White Duck, Style 456, 12/9.

Style 385

25/-

Direct by Post.

Postage Abroad Extra.

How to Order Direct By Post:

State style required clearly, Black Brogues 1682; Brown Brogues 1482; Bowling Shoes 385; Tennis Shoes 456. Give usual size or "Footshape," and enclose Treasury Notes (in registered letter), Cheque or Money Order for full amount for Home orders. For Overseas orders where Cash on Delivery is not available, send full amount with postage. Weight of Brogues (packed), 4 lbs. From Countries using Cash on Delivery, 10/- deposit only to be sent with order.

If not satisfactory, return Shoes unsoiled. Money sent back immediately.

Send Your Order Now to W. BARRATT & CO., Ltd., 20, "Footshape," Northampton, Eng.

Write for Barratts 115-page Illustrated Catalogue for 1922 (postage 3d.).

THE LITTLE FAIRY OF GOOD HEALTH SAYS:-

Don't let old Sol bowl you out.

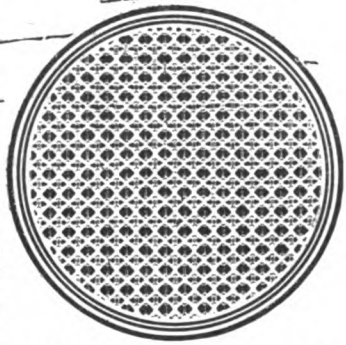
Are you limp, languid, listless and all-forlorn on warm days—envious of those to whom the sunshine brings health and vigour?

You can enjoy the summer days too—the way of keeping cool and fresh is no secret.

Hundreds of thousands of folks braved last year's record summer right cheerily simply by wearing Aertex. They recognised an elementary principle of health—here it is: *Keep your pores well aired.* Let air, nature's great cleanser, clean out the heat-created skin-clogs, leaving the tissues cool and fresh, levelling the temperature of the body, protecting against chills and colds.

Aertex Cellular Underwear and Shirts contain hundreds of tiny cells—air cushions—which permit the free passage of air to every part of the body.

It's invigorating, exhilarating, rejuvenating to wear Aertex—and all the while you feel *that* cool as though a kindly breeze had favoured you. This summer keep cool every day by wearing Aertex.



The AERTEX Cellular principle of fabric construction allows for the free circulation of even-temperature air next to the skin, stimulating and refreshing the tissues with fresh supplies of health-giving oxygen, preventing chills.

AERTEX is the ideal wear for summer days. Prove its value to-day.

Wear AERTEX cellular

UNDERWEAR FOR MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN, SHIRTS, SHEETS, ETC.

Reduced Prices

Look for the Aertex label on all genuine Aertex goods—refuse imitations.

A SELECTION FROM LISTS OF DEPOTS WHERE AERTEX CELLULAR GOODS MAY BE OBTAINED:

LONDON—ROBT. SCOTT, LTD., 8, Poultry, Cheapside, E.C. OLIVER BROS., LTD., 417, Oxford St., W. BOLTONS, LTD., 177, Piccadilly, W.

BIRMINGHAM—HYAM & CO., LTD., New St.

BRADFORD—HEY & CO., Hey's Corner.

BRIGHTON—G. OSBORNE & CO., East St.

BURTON-ON-TRENT—ELLIS & SON, High St.

DERBY—W. N. FLINT, 14-6, James St.

DUNDEE—A. CAIRD & SONS, LTD., 17, Reform St.

GLASGOW—PETTIGREW & STEPHENS, LTD.

HANLEY—J. E. CARHART, Piccadilly.

LEEDS—MARSHALLS, LTD., Bond St.

LIVERPOOL—WILKINSON BROS., South Rd., W'too.

Write for 1922 Catalogue, giving full range and prices of garments, etc., together with name of nearest retail depot.

THE CELLULAR CLOTHING CO., LTD., FORE STREET, LONDON, E.C.2.

Kodak holiday snapshots

SUNNY days and happy people! Sunburnt children busy with spades and pails, jolly parties playing "Ring o' Roses" in the surf, happy families picnicking on the cliffs, sturdy ramblers tramping cheerfully over moors or downs . . . . it is holiday time! There are pictures all around you. Start your book of happy memories now! Treat yourself to a Kodak to-day! Take this year's holiday happiness home in picture form. Remember you can learn to use a Kodak in half-an-hour.

Let your holidays live forever in your

Kodak

All Kodaks and Brownies have been reduced in price. Here are two popular models

Vest Pocket Autographic Kodak, fitted with Meniscus Achromatic Lens, fits the waistcoat pocket and takes pictures 2½ × 1¾. Price 35/-

No. 1a Autographic Kodak Junior, fitted with Meniscus Achromatic Lens and Ball-bearing Shutter—takes pictures 4¼ × 2½. Price £3-15-0

Kodak Limited, Kingsway, London, W.C. 2.

Furniture of Economy, Comfort and Wear

CASH OR EASY PAYMENTS — Free and Safe Delivery

by Motor Traction, or Rail to nearest Railway Station.

SUITES WHICH WILL GIVE SATISFACTION IN WEAR.

If not approved of, can be returned at our expense, and any money paid will be refunded in full.

3-Piece "PEMBROKE" Solid Oak Bedroom Suite.

Comprising WARDROBE, DRESSING CHEST and WASHSTAND. WARDROBE 4 ft. 6 ins. extreme width, 4 ft. on Carcass, height 6 ft. 10 ins. Mirror of Bevelled and Silvered Plate Glass, 50 ins. by 15 ins. Made in three parts, full width drawer, ample hanging accommodation, with brass revolving and side hooks. DRESSING CHEST 3 ft. wide, full width deep drawers, Jewel Drawer, Swing Mirror of Bevelled and Silvered Plate Glass, 28 ins. by 18 ins., mounted on Castors. WASHSTAND 3 ft. wide, Figured Marble Slab and Back, convenient cupboard, 2 Towel Rails affixed, mounted on Castors. The whole of the pieces are of SOLID OAK and will stand a LIFE TIME'S WEAR. Copper or Brass Handles of Antique finish. Mirrors are Bevelled and Silvered British Plate Glass. If Washstand not required deduct £5 5s. Oak Cane Chairs to match, **12s. 6d.** each.

Three Pieces, £36 Cash, or £3 with Order and 33 Payments of £1 2s. 6d. Monthly

3-PIECE CHESTERFIELD SUITE. Comprising SETTEE, seat 4 ft. by 2 ft. deep, overall 5 ft. 6 ins., with adjustable drop end, measuring when down 6 ft., height of back 3 ft. Pair of EASY CHAIRS, seats 2 ft. by 1 ft. 6 ins., mounted on Turned Stumps and Castors. The Interior Upholstery Work is of the best. English Web, Coppered Steel Springs, all double tied with linen twine, Superior Canvas, Coir Fibre, Washed Wool and Hair only being used, thus ensuring to the Purchaser lasting and comfortable Settee and Easy Chairs, with loose Kapok down cushions, suitable for any room, and guaranteed to stand the Hard Wear of every-day use. Separate Prices of Settee or Easy Chairs on application.

Finished in High-Grade Tapestry. Patterns to customers' own selection.

3-Piece "PEMBROKE" Soundly-Upholstered Chesterfield Suite.

Three Pieces, £32 10s. Cash, or £3 with Order and 33 Payments of £1 Monthly

FREE Our Fully Illustrated Catalogue, together with Terms, etc. A perusal of this will save you Pounds in Furnishing.

GLOBE Furnishing Co. (Dept. E), J. R. GRANT, Proprietor. **Pembroke Place LIVERPOOL.**

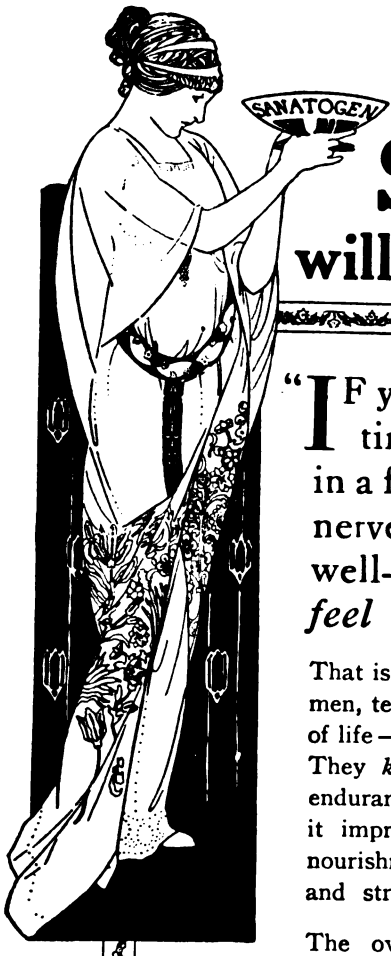
FOSTER CLARK'S

IT'S THE CREAMIEST CUSTARD

and this delightful quality is what makes it such an improvement on the ordinary custard. Delicious, tempting, economical, easily prepared, it makes an ideal dish with the fruits of the season. Try a package to-day.

REDUCED PRICES:—Family Tins 11½d., Family Packets 9½d., Small Packets, 4d., 1½d. & 1d.

CREAM CUSTARD



What SANATOGEN will do for your Health

"IF you take Sanatogen regularly three times a day, you will have gained in a few weeks a fund of added health nerve-strength, and a general sense of well-being, which you cannot fail to *feel* and appreciate."

That is what many thousands of doctors, authors, clergymen, teachers — in fact men and women in every walk of life — have proved by their own personal experience. They *know* how Sanatogen infuses new strength and endurance into weak and nervous people, how wonderfully it improves digestion, how quickly its concentrated nourishment builds up the body-cells and gives new tone and strength to the entire system.

The overworked business man, mothers (especially nursing mothers), men and women who have made too heavy drafts upon their vitality, will find in Sanatogen a splendid source of renewed health and strength. And remember, Sanatogen is a *natural*, healthful food and tonic — purest protein and organic phosphorus — free from anything unnatural or harmful, so that little children can take it with nothing but benefit.

Sir Hall Caine writes: *— "I have lately had further proof of the efficacy of Sanatogen in building up and restoring the nervous system under conditions of severe mental and emotional strain."*

Resolve *now* to begin a course of Sanatogen, it will be the best thing you ever did for your health. All Chemists sell Sanatogen from **2/3** to **10/9** per tin.

Made by GENATOSAN, Ltd., Loughborough, Leicestershire.

For One Guinea you may possess a Reproduction of the Real Pearl Necklet you have so long wished for.

YOU may be deciding to indulge in a real pearl necklace costing about £400. Why contemplate such a risky investment in these days of bad business when the famous

Ciro Pearls

are available? Not only may you possess for one guinea the absolute facsimile of the £400 necklet of your dreams, but you are **£398 : 19 : 0** to the good to invest in a safer direction. And even if you did not contemplate spending more than a £1 : 1 : 0 you profit just the same, for in return for the guinea spent on Ciro Pearls you secure a necklet which represents a few hundred pounds' worth in appearance and wear.

"TRUTH," of March 1st, 1922, after a most complete investigation into the reason for the world-wide popularity of Ciro Pearls, states :—"Ciro Pearls are frankly reproductions, but they are *perfect* reproductions. In weight, hardness, and lustre, there is no detectable difference to the ordinary eye between the Ciro Pearl and the natural pearl. . . The expert has indeed been again and again misled into thinking that Ciro Pearls are the product of the oyster and not of the laboratory."

OUR UNIQUE OFFER.

On receipt of one guinea, we will send you a necklet of Ciro Pearls 16 inches long. with clasp and case complete, or a ring, brooch, ear-rings, or any other Ciro Pearl jewel in hand-made gold settings. If, after comparing them with real or other artificial pearls, they are not found equal to the former or superior to the latter, return them to us within fifteen days and we will refund your money. Ciro Pearl necklets may also be obtained in any length required. We have a large staff of expert pearl stringers.

Latest descriptive booklet No. 12 sent post free on application.

Our only address in Great Britain

Ciro Pearls Ltd
39 Old Bond Street London W.1 Dept 12.

We have no Agents or Branches

OUR SHOWROOMS ARE ON THE FIRST FLOOR—OVER LLOYD'S BANK.

Maison Lyons Chocolates

Within two or three years these Chocolates have become the popular favourite—it's real goodness that has put them at the top of the tree. **4/-lb.**

Sold by High-Class Confectioners and in the Salons at the Corner Houses, the Maisons Lyons, and in every LYONS TEASHOP.

J. Lyons & Co., Ltd., London, W.

Chivers' Jellies

Flavoured with Ripe Fruit Juices.

CHIVERS & SONS, Ltd.,
THE ORCHARD FACTORY, HISTON, CAMBRIDGE

When you see a TUMBLER think of GLASS LEMON

Twenty glasses for 8d., simply by adding water.

FREEMAN'S GLASS LEMON requires neither boiling water to dissolve it nor added sugar to sweeten it. You use nothing but natural cold water and you waste no time—but you do get satisfaction. Ask your grocer.

Freeman's Glass Lemon

Made in Delectaland.

FL 1-63

"The Sea's Best Fish—'TYNE BRAND' HERRINGS—at their Very Best!"

M. Philip Labbe, Vice Pres. Club Culinaire, says:—"They have procured the warmest praise I have ever heard given to preserved fish."

M. Marcel Lataste, Chef to Lord Weardale, says:—"In my opinion they are equal to the best tinned Salmon."

For any Meal.

For the Perfect Picnic.

For Yachting Parties.

The chef d'œuvres of Fish Packing!

Open a tin of "Tyne Brand"—see how daintily the fish are packed—see the rich colour of the tomato sauce. *Open a fish* and note the firm, white meat—cooked to perfection—plump and tender as chicken!

Taste "Tyne Brand"! Note their *freshness* of flavour, their toothsome tenderness. "*No wonder they call them the sea's best fish at their very best*"!

What a welcome treat for summer meals is this *All-British* Fish Delicacy! Ready-to-eat straight from the tin—or made into delicious satisfying sandwiches and salads—or as any of the dainty dishes for which London's leading Chefs have devised special recipes. Give your family this treat-to-eat to-day!

"Tyne Brand"

Herrings in Tomato Sauce.

OVAL TINS:

***1-lb.** net (a full meal for four)* **1/1.** ***½-lb.** net (trial size)* **9d.**

G-U-A-R-A-N-T-E-E-D to please you!

Buy a tin of "Tyne Brand"—take it home—eat a fish. If you do not agree that "Tyne Brand" Herrings are all that we say they are, return the tin to the dealer. He has our authority to refund your money in full. If you want a tin of "Tyne Brand" quickly and cannot obtain it locally, send your grocer's name and address and 9d. stamps for ½-lb. Trial Tin and Recipe Booklet to—

£250 CASH PRIZE COMPETITIONS

Closing Date, June 30th. Results will be announced in the Daily Press.

TYNE BRAND PRODUCTS (Dept. M21), 329, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

Proprietors: Shields Ice & Cold Storage Co., Ltd., North Shields. *Export Sales Office: 98, Great Tower Street, E.C.3.*

'EASTERN·FOAM' VANISHING CREAM

The Charm of a Beautiful Skin

To ensure a charming beauty of Skin, there is nothing to compare with 'EASTERN FOAM' Vanishing Cream. By its use all blemishes will disappear, and your skin will acquire a delightful delicacy which will be the admiration of your friends. 'EASTERN FOAM' contains no objectionable ingredients such as grease, oil or menthol. It vanishes immediately, leaving no trace except its fascinating and exclusive perfume.

'EASTERN FOAM' is ideal for the Sports and Holiday Girl, protecting the skin from the harmful effects of sun and wind. Used after any exercise, it is wonderfully refreshing.

FREE DAINTY BEAUTY BOXES.

Dainty little aluminium boxes of 'EASTERN FOAM'—for the pocket or handbag—can be obtained on request Send to the address below, enclosing 1½d. stamped addressed envelope for return.—The British Drug Houses, Ltd. (Dept. T.A.), 16-30, Graham St., London, N.1.

'EASTERN FOAM' is sold in large pots (Price 1/4) by all Chemists and Stores.

Away —— at home. Use 'EASTERN·FOAM'

The "Grey Hair" Problem

Solved by a New Discovery

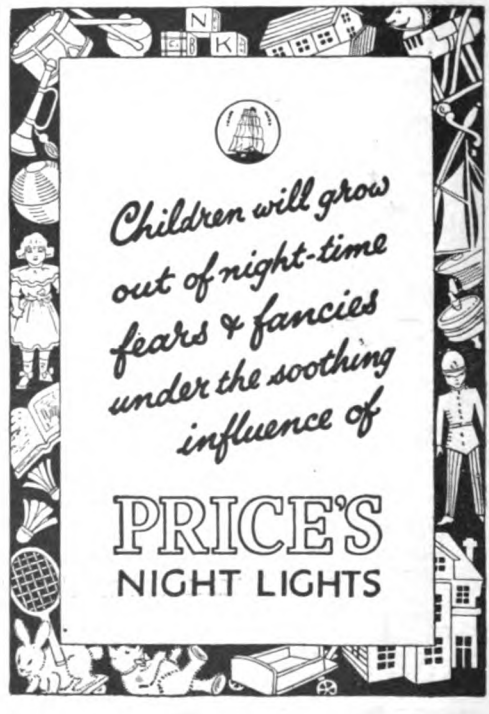
"Nuctone" is an entirely new discovery, which gradually restores the colour to the Hair, without Dyeing.

Colour Restored Gradually, Permanently, Safely

There is no sudden change from greyness to the natural colour of the Hair, as with Dyeing. The colour comes gradually, but permanently and safely.

Guaranteed not to contain Sulphur, Lead, or any other injurious ingredients. Everyone who has tried "Nuctone" is delighted with the results. If your Hair is going grey, send for a bottle of "Nuctone" to day; **6/6** post free. "Nuctone" for Dark Hair. "Nuctone" Eclaire for Fair Hair.

J. Stewart, Ltd.,
Hair Specialists,
80, New Bond St.,
LONDON, W.1.



Passing Fads in Dentifrices

Modern science rejects "drugged" tooth pastes

PHYSICIANS AND DENTISTS know how from time to time extensive claims of one sort or another are put forward, attract attention, and pass out. Years ago phenol in a dentifrice was hailed as a dental cure-all. Later, peroxide appeared as a panacea to the teeth. Emetin (Ipecacuanha) suddenly promised more than any conscientious dentist could do by professional treatment in his own surgery. Chlorate of potash, too, had its day as the end-all of dental worries. But the pitiless test of time sweeps away absurd claims.

More recently the pepsin theory has been revived. The *Journal of Dental Research* has dealt very effectively with that.

QUESTION—What next? What will be the next drug used on which to build extensive claims for "patent medicine dentifrices"?

NOT A MEDICATED DENTIFRICE.—During all these years Colgate & Co. have refused to "drug" their Dental Cream. They followed scientific authority in the contention that strong drugs are harmful to the mucous membrane of the mouth. Such drugs should not be used in a dentifrice except in the treatment of diseased conditions, and then only under the advice of a practitioner.

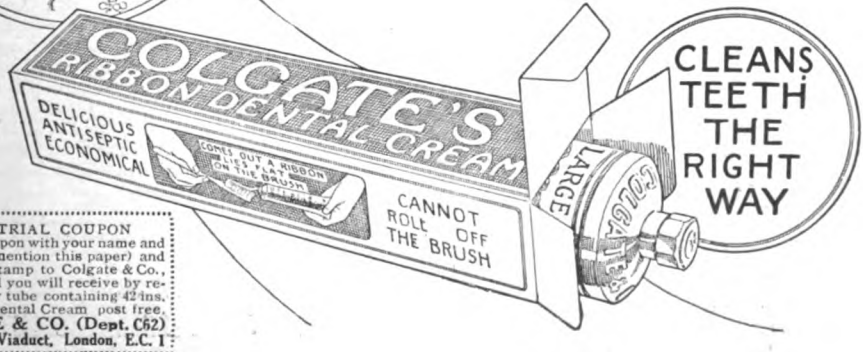
Colgate's stand with the members of the two great professions, who refuse to recognise the false claims of medicated tooth pastes, but who recommend to their patients a dental cream with thorough cleansing qualities, pleasant to taste, containing safe ingredients.

Colgate's Ribbon Dental Cream is very mildly alkaline, practically neutral, and cleanses without disturbing Nature's balance.

Recognising that all good dental creams aid cleanliness, Colgate & Co. ask no more than that professional men in advising should differentiate between the true and the pseudo-scientific.

Colgate's cannot harm the enamel or soft tissues—it leaves the mouth clean, cool and refreshed.

COLGATE'S



FREE TRIAL COUPON
Send this coupon with your name and address (or mention this paper) and enclose 2d. stamp to Colgate & Co., as under, and you will receive by return a dainty tube containing 4 2 ins. of Ribbon Dental Cream post free.
COLGATE & CO. (Dept. C62)
46 Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C. 1

STANWORTHS'
"Defiance" REGD
UMBRELLAS.

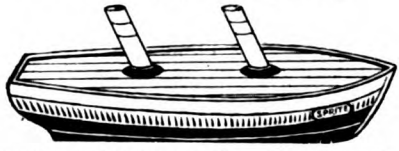
Just Wrap Your OLD UMBRELLA

in paper, tie to a board or stick, and post to us to-day with P.O. for **7/6**. By next post it will come back "as good as new," re-covered with our "Defiance" Union and securely packed. Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra. A postcard will bring you our illustrated Catalogue of "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from **5/-** upwards.

J. STANWORTH & CO.,
Royal Umbrella Works,
BLACKBURN.

Seaside Joys FOR Girls and Boys ARE RUBBADUBDUB REGISTERED FLOATING TOYS

They will be delighted with this Rubbadubdub Boat, which cannot sink, and is just the thing for long voyages of imagination.



These toys pack flat for travelling, and are no trouble to carry. Fitted with an improved valve which renders them absolutely airtight. May be obtained at Boots' Chemists, Hamleys' Toy Shops and leading stores.

Send 1d. stamp to the Manufacturers for the Children's Fairy Book, "Magic Land of Rubbadub," together with a fully illustrated list of Floating Toys.

J. G. FRANKLIN & SONS, LTD.,
11/17, Colvestone Crescent, London, E.8.

The Pleats are PERMANENT

¶ A lady writes: "It would be difficult to exaggerate the subtle charm of my skirt, and that after two months' constant wear."

¶ By a new process the pleats of our skirts, which are arranged box and knife as sketch, are rendered indestructible, so that the fascinating appearance always associated with pleats is everlasting.

THE WIDTH AT HEM IS 100 INCHES

permitting free movement without distributing pleats, and obviating the peg-top effect of narrow skirts.

Made in all Wool Serge of suitable weight **for Present Wear**, in rich shades of CREAM, NAVY, BLACK, NIGGER, LT. GREY, DARK GREY, BEAVER, PUTTY.

Sent post free for **20/-**
Undoubtedly worth 2 Gns.

In lengths 32, 34, 36, 38; *waists* 24, 26, 28 *in. each length. Larger waists to order same price.*

Money refunded, with cost of returning garment, if not satisfied.

A. S. CARR & WESTLEY, Ltd.,
1, Warwick Court, London, W.C.1.
(Near Chancery Lane Tube.)

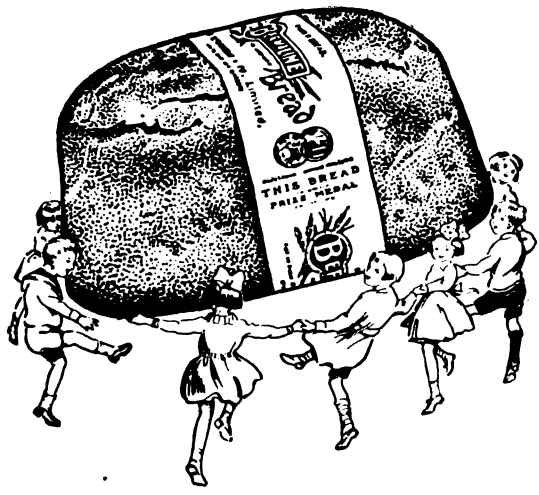
3 hours Cooking for 1 penny

Only an "ONWARD" Oven can make cooking as cheap as that, because the "ONWARD" is equipped with a special device to retain heat and economise in gas consumption. And it cooks to perfection in half the time. No spoiled dishes. Simply leave it to the "ONWARD" to make a positive success of every meal, and be finished with cooking drudgery.

Many other advantages are explained in our Booklet "*A Hot Favourite*," which may be had free on application. Address, Dept. S.

"ONWARD" Ovens are sold by Ironmongers everywhere, or may be had from Sole Makers and Patentees,

EDWIN CHAMBERS, LTD.
Onward Works, Leeds Road, Bradford.



The Bread your children should have

"BERMALINE" is of the utmost value as a children's food, its unique feature being that it contains everything necessary for perfect nutrition in an easily digestible form. It is absolutely pure, and provides all the elements necessary for buildjng up the constitutions of sturdy, happy children, especially in their earlier days.

Baked with the choicest wheat flour—made more delicious in flavour, more nutritious and easier to digest by the addition of Extract of Malt—there is no form of food more attractive and satisfying than "BERMALINE." See that your children get it.

"Bermaline" Bread

The Proprietors of "BERMALINE"—MONTGOMERIE & CO., Ltd., IBROX, GLASGOW—supply the special ingredients for making "BERMALINE" Bread to Bakers who are agents throughout the United Kingdom.

ΦMr.

42/- "Mattamac" (Reg'd.)

You can't *possibly* get wet in the

Feather-weight Stormproof.

Don't risk disappointment with an imitation. Get the *genuine* "Mattamac" Stormproof, which is labelled "Mattamac" beneath the Coat-hanger. A "Mattamac" is identical in appearance with the usual five-guinea Weatherproof. In utility, also, it equals its much-more-costly Competitor. It wears as long, weighs one-third, and is absolutely Waterproof, Light and compact-folding, Wind, Chill, and Wet proof, a "Mattamac" is the Ideal Coat for Holiday and Going-away Wear. Get one for the Summer.

WEIGHT 19 ozs.

FOLDS INTO THIS SIZE.

Fits the jacket pocket or Attaché Case.

(Reg'd. Trade Mark.)

42/-

For Man, Woman, and Child. Also made for Equestrian, Military, and Sporting Wear.

"Matta" Fabric is exceedingly compact. The coat worn by the 6-ft. man beneath, when folded, just made this handful.

This is an actual photograph of his hand and the "Mattamac" he wears, folded to fit snugly into his jacket pocket.

3 OZS. HEAVIER THAN AN UMBRELLA.

Sporting (19 oz.) Model, 42/-

19 OUNCES WEIGHT 42/-

Belted Models (21½ oz.), 47/6

Belted Model, 47/6

Colours:— *Fawn, Olive, Tan, Grey, Black, and Blue Shades.*

Children's Models for all ages at size prices

Equestrian wide-skirted (22 oz.) Model (Fawn and Khaki only),

59/6

With Belt, (24½ ozs.),

65/-

Illustrations are direct drawings from photos of stock "Mattamac" Stormproofs costing 42/-; *Belted Models,* 47/6.

In 6 shades, 11 Adult Models, and 40 sizes. Also for Children.

MADE FOR EVERY OUTDOOR PURPOSE.

Town and Country Models, in **Fawn, Olive, Grey, Tan, Black, and Blue Shades, 42/-;** Belted Models for Ladies, Civilians, and Military, **47/6;** wide-skirted Equestrian Models from **59/6;** and Children's Models for all ages at size prices. Made entirely from the genuine, hard-wearing, all-weather-proof "Matta" (Reg'd.) Fabric, with wind-cuffs, perpendicular pockets, lined shoulders, Raglan sleeves, roomy "under-arms," and the famous cut of Conduit Street.

"MATTAMAC" ART BOOKLET POST FREE, illustrating Adult and Children's Models. A p.c. brings Booklet and 6 colour Patterns of "Matta" Fabric, or you can safely order now

SENT OUT ON SEVEN DAYS' FREE APPROVAL. You buy without risk. Send chest measurement **over** waistcoat (Ladies measure over Blouse), height, and remittance, stating colour, and your "Mattamac" will be sent post free in the U.K. (extra abroad). If you are not fully satisfied, you can return it within 7 days of receipt, and get your money back in full. Write for Booklet **"26X"** and colour patterns of "Matta" Fabric. Ordering Forms, etc., to the Sole Makers of "Mattamac" Stormproofs; or inspect Models at the "Mattamac" Showrooms:—

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NEW MIDLAND SHOWROOMS at Exchange Buildings, 134, NEW ST., BIRMINGHAM.

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Shoe Distinction by POST

30/-

Post Free. *Abroad extra.*

Style 1701.———In fine Patent Colt. *119 fittings.*

A large claim to make. The certainty of satisfying the varying footwear demands of many climes. The certainty of finding a perfect fit for the variations of the human foot. Yet the name warrants the truth of these claims. A man may order Saxone shoes by post with utmost reliance on their fit, their quality, their wearing value.

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The Patent leather shoe illustrated is an example of Saxone shoe distinction. Cut from fine Patent leather, shaped on a smart last, light, flexible, stylish, a shoe which proclaims one's good taste in footwear. Send size or outline of foot.

Carriage paid British Isles.

SAXONE

SAXONE SHOE CO., LTD. (DEPT. S7)

Kilmarnock.

Don't have these in your boots again!

The nails or screws with which your rubber soles are fixed do more damage to your boots than you save in boot leather.

In wet weather the nails or screws rust, thus causing the leather to rot.

Avoid this in future by fitting your shoes with

ENGLEBERT SOLES HEELS SUBSOLES AND TIPS

"Springy-Light-and-Watertight"

No Nails. No Screws. Invisible in Wear.

You can easily fix them yourself with the Englebert Solution supplied free with each pair.

If you cannot obtain Subsoles from your local dealer, send us his name and address, or we will forward a pair with free tube of solution for 2/9 (Ladies') or 4/- (Gent.'s).

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Aching, weak and hot feet, bunions, corns, callouses, weak ankles, run-over heels, hammer toes, etc., are common foot troubles that can easily be remedied.

DR. SCHOLL'S FOOT-EAZER affords comfort and relief in a moment to tired, aching feet, weak arches, flat foot, etc. Worn comfortably in your ordinary shoes. Price per pair **10/6**

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Foot aches and foot pains usually result from a weakening of some part of the foot structure, causing undue strain on the ligaments and muscles which support the arches of the foot

Dr Scholl's
Foot Comfort Appliances

rest the feet at all times, giving a feeling of complete relief that is followed by the permanent correction of the foot ailment.

Constructed on strictly anatomical and scientific lines from only specially selected materials, "Scholl" Appliances have received the universal approval of the Medical profession. 80 per cent. of the Foot Appliances sold in 43 different countries are "Scholl" made, and millions of satisfied customers testify to their merits.

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Miss MAIDIE SCOTT

says:—

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Your skin needs these two Creams—the Vanishing Cream, free from oil, which vanishes instantly—the Cold Cream with an oil base which supplements the natural oil of the skin.

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Some face creams encourage the growth of hair. You are safe with Pond's Creams, which never promote the growth of hair.

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Also Collapsible Tubes, **7½d.** *(handbag size) and* **1/-**

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Every Home needs this Healer

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Cuts, scratches, &c., are apt to become inflamed and painful if neglected. Wright's Coal Tar Ointment is

THE safe and satisfactory domestic healing salve. It relieves irritation of the skin from any cause and is so mild that it may be used safely and confidently for roughness of the skin and blemishes of the complexion.

Of all Chemists and Stores. In tins 1/3, *in jars (triple size)* 2/9. *If any difficulty in obtaining write to Wright, Layman and Umney, Ltd., Southwark, S.E.1.*

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THAT BANE

— OF THE ACTIVE WOMAN —

Can be naturally reduced and robbed of all its unpleasantnesses by the regular use of *"Poudre de Santé."*

"Poudre de Santé" is a delightful and hygienic Toilet Powder which instantly destroys the acrid odour of perspiration, and, used regularly, will permanently correct the lax conditions of the skin which give rise to it.

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For the hair, from Dr. Mavallet of Paris.

WHY LOSE YOUR HAIR WHEN THIS CAN BE PREVENTED?

Because you do not know of, or do not use JEAN HENRY'S "FORTNIGHT TAR TREATMENT." This method is unfailing for falling hair, scurf, dandruff, eczema, alopecia, or general anæmia. The Treatment contains no spirit or acid that is injurious to the hair or scalp.

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TAR POMADE,	TAR SHAMPOO POWDER,	TAR LOTION,
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Beware of imitations. See the name *CAMILLE* across every label.

Tar Treatment can be obtained from Stores and Chemists, or direct from

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The neatest and most efficient method of marking linen.

Woven on fine Cambric Tape in fast turkey red, black, green, gold, helio, sky or navy blue lettering.

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To be obtained of all Drapers and Outfitters.

A Special and Finer Tape can be supplied for marking Handkerchiefs and small articles.

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Samples and full list of Styles FREE on application to—

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The CORSET of HEALTH

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8/11 pair. Post Free *Postage abroad extra.*

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Complete with Special Detachable Suspenders. Stocked in all sizes from 20 to 30. Made in finest quality Drill.

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It has a short (9 in.) busk in front which ensures a perfect shape, and is fastened at the top and bottom with non-rusting Hooks and Eyes.

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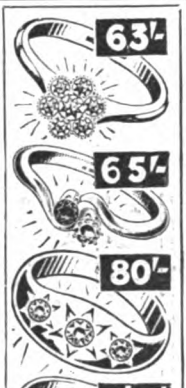

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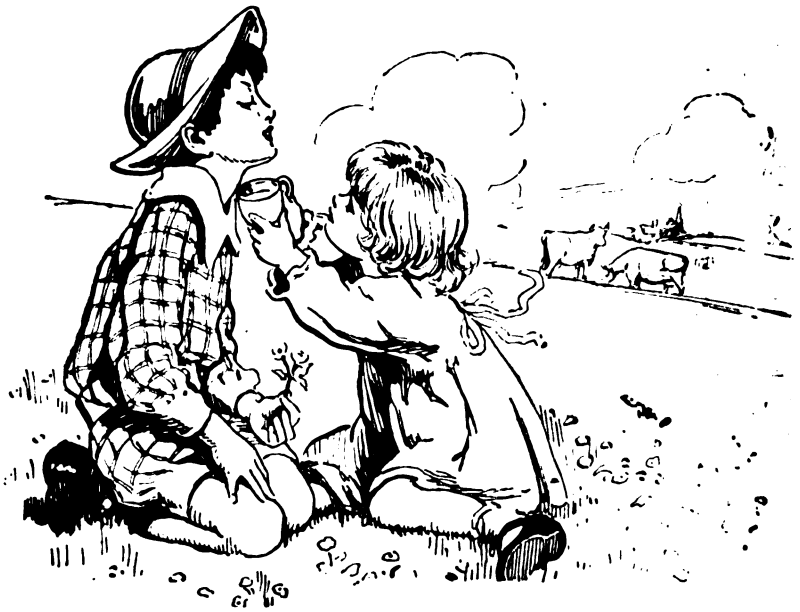

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Who does not recall happy childhood days spent in the buttercup meadows. The fresh, vigorous growth of the meadow grass so eagerly consumed by the cows, yields milk which is richer in life-giving nourishment than at any other time of the year.

Therefore, now is the best time for our boys and girls to gain stronger bodies and sturdier limbs. Build them up with milk made into Bird's Custard.

Serve it at every mid-day meal, because

BIRD'S CUSTARD,

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This is a good reason why lots of Bird's Custard should figure in the children's meals. Mothers cannot do wrong in serving Bird's Custard in abundance with plenty of stewed fruit, and plenty of steamed puddings.

1½d. pkts.; 7d. & 1/2 Silvered Boxes; 1/7½ Large Tins.

C68a

India and Australia, Canada and New Zealand are calling for these ¼-lb. airtight tins.

No flavourings. No tricks. Just mighty good American and Irish tobaccos, aged by slow maturing and blended successfully for the *first* time.

The flavour is mild—yet not *too* mild. Full—yet not too strong. Medium—yet full of richly-soft satisfying qualities that mark the blend as different from other mixtures as chalk from cheese.

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Get Cordangan from any good tobacconist. In 1 oz., 2 oz. and 4 oz. packets, and 4 oz. air-tight tins at 1/1 the ounce. London Sales Office – Dobbin Ogilvie & Co., Ltd., Kingsway House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2. Ф 9

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Keep your hands always White and Soft

A Boon to Houseworkers Motorists, Motor Cyclists Gardeners, Sportsmen, Artists, Naval Officers, and YOU.

1. PELDO the hands first.
2. Do the grimiest work you care to.
3. Wash with soap and water — the grime rolls off.
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Regd. **Peldo** (Patent applied for)

Price **1/6** SKIN CREAM

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Also MINERAL IMPURITIES

that aggravate Rheumatism and Gout, impair the digestion, cause Constipation, Stone and Gravel, stiffen the joints and impede the circulation, are all removed from ordinary water by

The Gem Pure-Water Still.

A simple apparatus for domestic use. Recommended by "Lancet," medical men, and health authorities.

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Old English Lavender Soap

The Aristocrat of Toilet Soaps.

There is no finer quality soap made. Its soft, mellow lather refines the skin and keeps the complexion youthful.

It is deliciously and lavishly perfumed, and its delightful fragrance lingers on the skin and about the room long after use.

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The "FLORENCE"
TEA and DINNER SERVICES in the FAMOUS SWANSEA BLUE,

Consisting of—

Tea Service.	Dinner Service.
12 Tea Cups	6 Dinner Plates
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Tea Set finished in Best English Gold.

The Lot £3/6/6 Packed Free. Carriage Paid.
Safe Delivery Guaranteed.

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This beautiful Tea Service. Splendid Quality. Tea Service, 6 persons, **18/3.** Dinner Service, **39/3.**
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The Price You Pay

For dingy film on teeth

Let us show you by a ten-day test how combating film in this new way beautifies the teeth.

Now your teeth are coated with a viscous film. You can feel it with your tongue. It clings to teeth, enters crevices and stays there. It forms the basis of fixed cloudy coats.

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Film absorbs stains, making the teeth look dingy. Film is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acids. It holds the acids in contact with the teeth and the acids may cause decay.

Film is now regarded as a potential source of most tooth troubles. And, despite the tooth brush, they have constantly increased.

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Careful people have this film removed twice yearly by their dentists. But the need is for a daily film combatant.

Now dental science, after long research, has found two ways to fight film. Able authorities have proved their efficiency. A new-type tooth paste has been perfected to comply with modern requirements. The name is Pepsodent. These two film combatants are embodied in it, to fight the film twice daily.

Two other effects

Pepsodent also multiplies the starch digestant in saliva. That is there to digest starch deposits which otherwise may cling and form acids.

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Millions of people now use Pepsodent, largely by dental advice. The results are seen everywhere — in glistening teeth.

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The New-Day Dentifrice

Endorsed by modern authorities and now advised by leading dentists nearly all the world over. All druggists supply the large tubes.

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Mail 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent to—

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Give full address. Write plainly. Only one tube to a family.

STRAND MAG. July.

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The nearest approach to mother's milk is cow's milk (fresh, dried or condensed), diluted with Barley Water made from Robinson's "Patent" Barley. The millions of healthy men and women reared in this way during the last 100 years are its best testimony. It contains less than 1 per cent. starch.

Robinson's 'PATENT' BARLEY

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Copy this for Free Criticism.

You *can* develop that instinct which makes you *want to Sketch*. This Seaside Lady is a Pupil's work. He started to Draw for the fun and joy of it. Sketching is now his Career and he is making his way towards the front rank rapidly.

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If you are interested in Sketching *from any aspect*—as Amateur or Professional—I would like you to know all about my two Postal Drawing Courses. They show the *direct path* to Sketching proficiency and are fully described in my

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Beginners will find the PREPARATORY COURSE intensely interesting and thoroughly happy. The ADVANCED COURSE teaches Technique. It is designed as a "finishing" Course for the young Artist who *can* Draw, but is unable to *sell his work*.

Write for my Prospectus. If you send a copy of this Pupil's Sketch, or an original Drawing (preferred), I will send you a helpful Criticism free *as well as* the Prospectus. Address me personally:—Percy V. Bradshaw, Principal.

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The "Alpha" goes away with thousands of men each year—Why?

Because it is a Portable Trouser Press and Suit Hanger which **packs into 3 x 2 x 2½ ins.; weighs 20 ozs.;** creases and stretches trousers perfectly and makes the whole suit wrinkle-free. Keep an "ALPHA" for your suit always—it lasts practically a life-time.

Your friends use it. **Post Free 8/6 in U.K.**

"ALPHA" No. 2 DE LUXE. Polished Walnut Slats. Extra-power Nickelled Springs and Fittings. Hangs on bar or hook. **15/6** Post Free

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Superior qualities **25/-** to **80/-**

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SPORTS JACKET & KNICKERS, £5-5-0

Made to Measure.
Sold by many at Seven Guineas.

Send for Patterns & Self-Measure Form

State requirements and quote "Dept. M.S."

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REUDEL BATH SALTRATES

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Cures Corns or Callouses & All Foot Troubles

Stops Rheumatic Aches & Pains Within Ten Minutes

Banishes Muscular Strains & Sprains Chilblains, Eczema, Rashes, Insect Bites & Similar Tortures.

Unrivalled for Gout Lumbago Sciatica, Neuritis & All Uric Acid Disorders, Skin Diseases, Etc.

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THEY ALL USE & HIGHLY RECOMMEND

REUDEL BATH SALTRATES

as also do EUGENE CORRI, J. B. HOBBS, ERNEST BARRY, ABE MITCHELL, GEO. CARPENTIER, T. DESCAMPS, BILLY WELLS, JIMMY WILDE, JOE BECKETT, ALFRED SHRUBB, TOM PAYNE, and hundreds of other prominent people.

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The Russian Famine's Terrible Toll

AGONISING SCENES TOO AWFUL TO BE DESCRIBED.

Immediate and Generous Help Wanted at once to Check the World's Greatest Tragedy of Infant Suffering and Mortality.

Horror follows upon horror in the Famine-stricken Areas of Russia.

Remorselessly have suffering little children been driven to a death too horrible to contemplate. Their bodies have been tortured with the gnawing pains of hunger, their hearts wrung with anguish as they saw friend after friend succumb to the inevitable, and realized that THEIR OWN END would be soon—but none the less horrible. And the terrible Death Roll is daily increasing, and the mere contemplation of the coming Burning Hunger of Summer and the awful epidemics which will be engendered by the Heat makes one shudder. Unless help is forthcoming immediately, the whole civilised world must witness a tragedy of infant suffering such as it has never seen or imagined.

Those who have visited the Famine Areas and seen the haunting look in the big staring eyes of the starving little ones can never forget them. They seem to follow them wherever they go. Will you not rescue one or more of these victims of the most terrible visitation the world has ever seen, clinging to life to the last, whilst the dead and dying lie around them? Can you think of this terrible agony and fail to participate in this the greatest rescue work the world has ever known?

CORPSES PILED IN COMMON GRAVES.

So terrible is the Death Roll that in almost every district of the Famine Area there is a continuous procession of the **dying** people carrying the **dead** to the common graves—ghastly yawning pits, which day by day receive innumerable fresh victims.

Hour by hour, child after child is dropping into the yawning grave. This endless stream of corpses keeps falling, falling, falling, into the open pit. Will you not help to stem this stream? Will you not stand in front of the grave and snatch those little ones from the brink, out of the very hands of Death? You can buy them back. You can buy them back NOW.

THESE LIVES COST ONE POUND. HOW MANY LIVES WILL YOU BUY?

ONE PENNY HALFPENNY keeps a child for a day—only one penny halfpenny! This tiny sum makes all the difference to a little sufferer between Agony and Happiness! One pound feeds a child for twenty weeks.

With swollen bodies, emaciated limbs, maddened by hunger and despair, these wretched people are eating clay and grass and refuse. And the———(details are too horrible to print).

"I have been through Hell," is the customary comment of British travellers.

WHAT THE "SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND" IS DOING.

The "Save the Children Fund" gives relief to suffering CHILDREN, snatching them from an appalling death. The "Save the Children Fund," under British control, has undertaken to feed children in the famine areas of Russia with plain but wholesome, hot, nourishing food. The Fund has SEVERAL HUNDRED KITCHENS working in Russia, and every kitchen means life to many starving little ones. All that has been done is, however, but one iota of what MUST be done.

Immediate Action Alone Can Save the Lives of Russia's Stricken Little Ones!

It is a true but terrible fact that unless we are sent more money immediately the doors of some of our Kitchens will have to be closed. The children will come to them, crying piteously in their despair, and WILL BE TURNED AWAY. No more bread, no more hot soup, no more rice and cocoa—not a broken scrap, not a mouthful of food. Their agonizing cries will fall on deaf ears, in vain will their little hands be held out. The waiting, clamouring children will be driven away.

They will stagger off along the roads to the wretched hovels, where they will fall down to die. For hours and hours, for days and days, they will linger on. How slowly the hours of suffering will pass!

Children's arms are extended to you—their wail for food—their tiny voices are *almost hushed by death.* Listen! Their call is in the air. Every moan of wind in the trees is but the echo of the waning voice of a dying child. Even now babies are dying—even as you read these words tiny toddlers are succumbing — every hour boys and girls wilt and die just like roses from Nature's garden. Can you ignore the small child's voice that says "HELP! and HELP QUICKLY"?

You Can Help If You Will.

You are not asked to give to a fantastic cause—your money is wanted to stave off starvation—1s. will feed a child for a week—one pound will save a life!

You cannot bring back those who have perished, but now with an open heart and willing spirit you can play your part in the greatest Humanitarian Crusade which the mind of man has ever conceived on behalf of suffering, dying people.

To such desperate straits have the people been driven in some districts that they have eaten the straw with which their houses were roofed—and the rest of their homes have been used for fuel. Now, foodless and without shelter, they huddle together or wander forth to die! Suffering unparalleled in its intensity is the lot of hundreds of thousands. It beggars description and defies imagination. Those who have witnessed it say that they have been through Hell. For Mercy's sake give, give again, and continue to give.

The Save the Children Fund, The Russian Famine Relief Fund, The Society of Friends' Fund, *realising how stupendous the task of Relief is and the need for Co-operation, have agreed to work together under a* **Joint Committee** *of representatives of each Fund with Sir Benjamin Robertson as Chairman.*

We plead with you to send all you can at once, for time is so precious, lives are so precious, and the Cause is so Sacred.

Do not hesitate—do not pause—because each instant's delay means another life sacrificed! Send now, immediately, ALL YOU CAN TODAY to

LORD WEARDALE, Chairman of Committee of "SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND" (Room 347a), 42, Langham Street, London, W.1.

I CURE WEAK NERVES!

I cordially invite every reader of the STRAND MAGAZINE who suffers from nerve weakness or ill-health of any description to write at once for my FREE BOOK on nerve trouble.

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If you are pessimistic, lacking in ambition, or without the energy to carry out your ambitions or perform your work satisfactorily, if everything seems a trial and a care instead of a joy and pleasure, it is a sure sign that you have become *neurasthenic*. In such case, you cannot possibly become the social or business success you were meant to be until you have regained health and fitness.

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I hold thousands of testimonials from patients who could not last through an entertainment or stay in a crowd until they came to me. My treatment was put to a severe test during the war with numbers of shell-shock cases—the worst form of neurasthenia it is possible to have.

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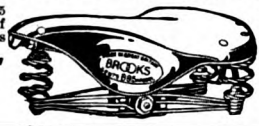

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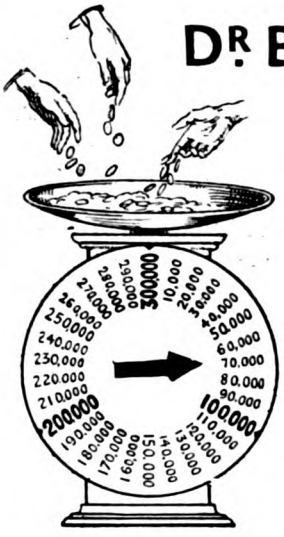

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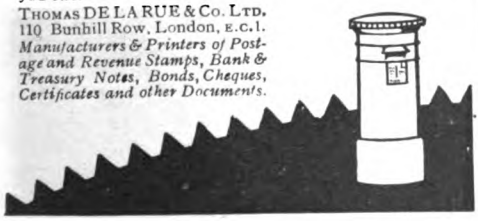

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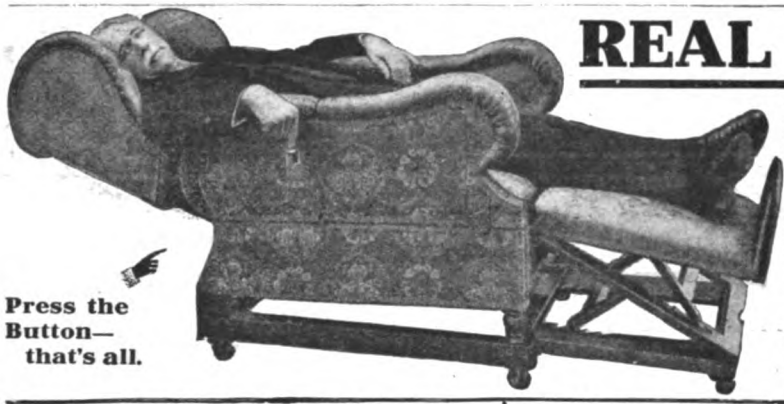

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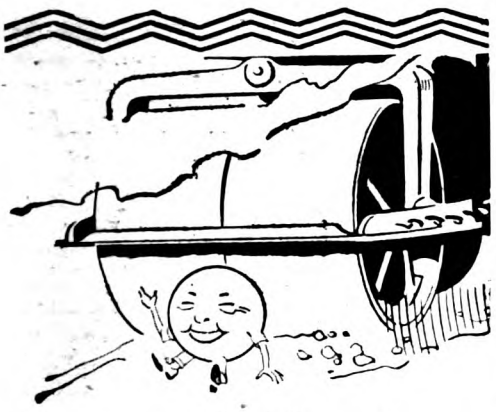

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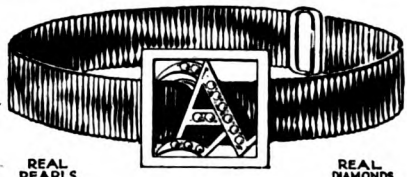

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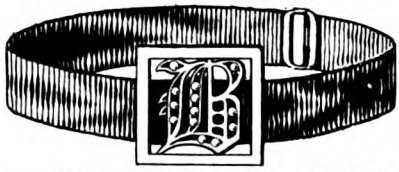

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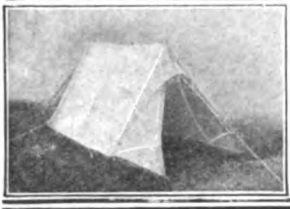

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means that you can throw away the painful truss altogether, as they are made to cure rupture and not simply to hold it; being made self-adhesive to prevent slipping, they have, therefore, also proven to be an important adjunct in retaining rupture that cannot be held by a truss. **No Straps, Buckles, or Springs Attached,** cannot slip, so cannot chafe or press against the pubic bone. Thousands have treated themselves in the privacy of the home—most obstinate cases reported cured—no delay from work. Soft as velvet—easy to apply—inexpensive. Process of recovery is natural, so afterwards no use for trusses.

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FOR ALCOHOLIC EXCESS

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THE NERVOUS STRAIN OF PRESENT-DAY CONDITIONS.

That a large percentage of the Community are relying to a greater or less extent upon the temporarily stimulating effects of Alcohol or Drugs is unquestionable. This disquieting fact, to which attention has been drawn in these announcements for many months past, is doubtless due to the abnormal strain and tax of present-day conditions. Men and women who in ordinary times have been able to maintain a normal standard of health have, owing to continuous strain and anxiety, been forced to depend to a great extent upon some form of alcoholic stimulant or drugs. Where the burden of anxiety cannot be escaped, the habit of reliance on such stimulants is readily formed, until it becomes a necessity, then a persistent craving, and ultimately a dominating power over the whole mental and physical energies.

Dr. G. W. Caswell (M.R.C.S., Eng., L.S.A.), in his treatise entitled "Effects of Alcoholic Excess," says: "The only satisfactory course to be adopted in every case of Alcoholic Excess, no matter what stage the disease may have reached, or what form it may have assumed, is to give the patient the immediate benefit of the *Turvey Treatment*, which will perform all that can be desired."

Patients or their friends can be seen daily between 10 and 5, or, if the form below is filled in and posted, full particulars will be sent under cover.

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Please forward me by return, under plain cover, full particulars and consultation form.

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How to Make Money with Your Pen.

TWO interesting books which show readers of *The Strand Magazine* how plenty of money can be made to-day by writing short stories and articles for the Magazines and Newspapers have just been issued by the London Correspondence College, which, founded by

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has been the means of enabling hundreds of men and women to become successful writers.

These books, entitled "Story-Writing and Journalism" and "The Pen and the Mind," contain a full description of the Courses in these subjects, which, taught through the post by the College, show those who take them how to write the short stories, articles and other literary contributions that sell.

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"Your Short Story Course tells the budding author exactly what we want him to know. It seems to me that your lectures are designed to save him from all the errors into which he usually falls; and the instruction is so full of commonsense and compressed so clearly that it cannot fail to be extraordinarily helpful to him. Furthermore—and this is not the least of its virtues—it will, if intelligently studied, save editors much time and money. I hope that these Courses will be very widely taken up."

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The great success of the College is undoubtedly very largely due to the great care and individual attention that is paid to each student. The training given by this institution has nothing mechanical or "ready-made" about it. The aim of the instruction given is to bring out the "individuality" of the students and to encourage them to express the personal note in their writings. No pains are spared to achieve this result. Consequently many students of the College are now making steady incomes with their pens, and all are finding themselves able to express their thoughts in their writings in a manner impossible to them before. All who wish to attain literary success should write at once, therefore, to the address printed below and obtain free copies of the two books describing the training given by the College.

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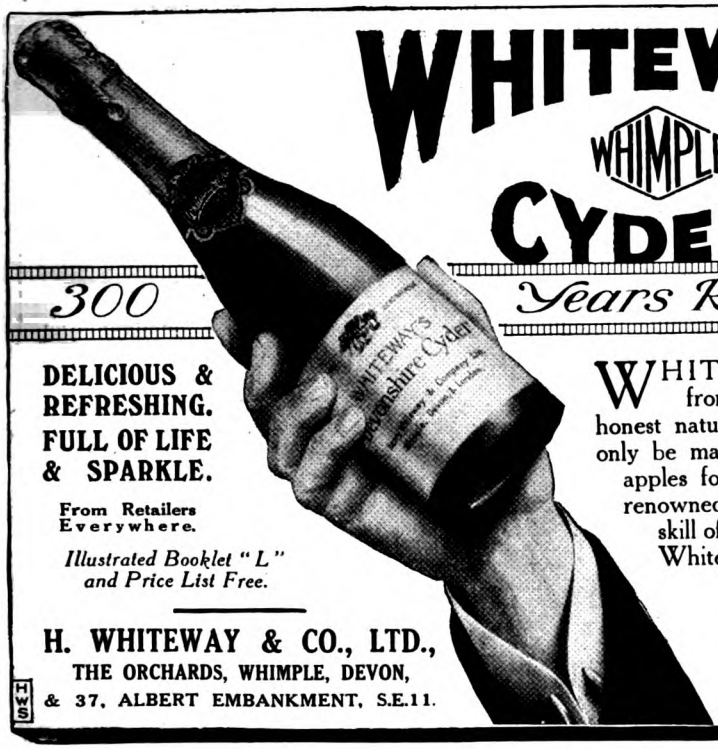

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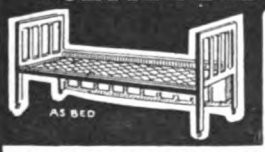

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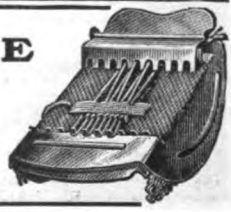

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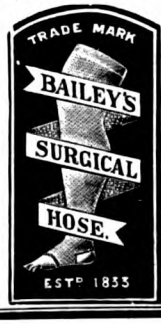

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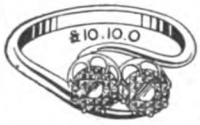

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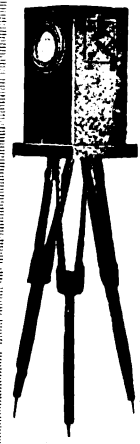

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Contents for July, 1922.

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Frontispiece: An avalanche of yellow horseflesh, with a white-faced man atop of it, came hurtling for the brook.

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE is printed by the Newnes and Pearson Printing Co., Ltd., N. Kensington, and published monthly by the Proprietors, George Newnes, Ltd., 8 to 11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, England. Subscription price to any part of the world, post free, for one year, 15s. (Canada, 14s.). Registered at the General Post Office for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Entered as Second-class Matter at the New York, N.Y., Post Office. Cases for binding volumes of THE STRAND MAGAZINE may be obtained to order from Booksellers for 3s., or post free for 3s. 4d. direct from the Office. Half-yearly Volumes, 7s. 6d. net.

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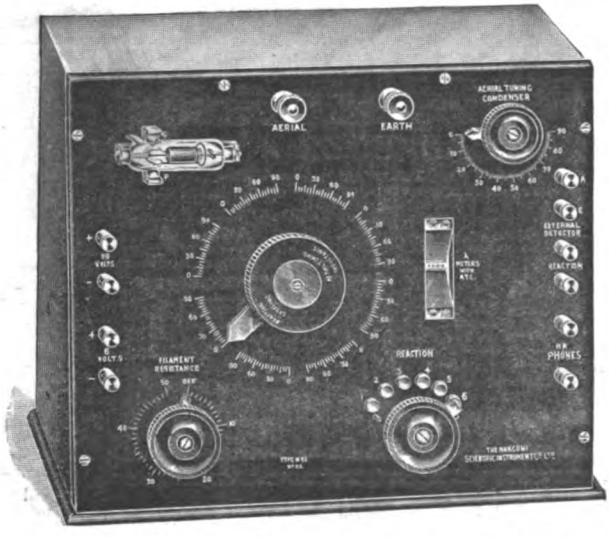

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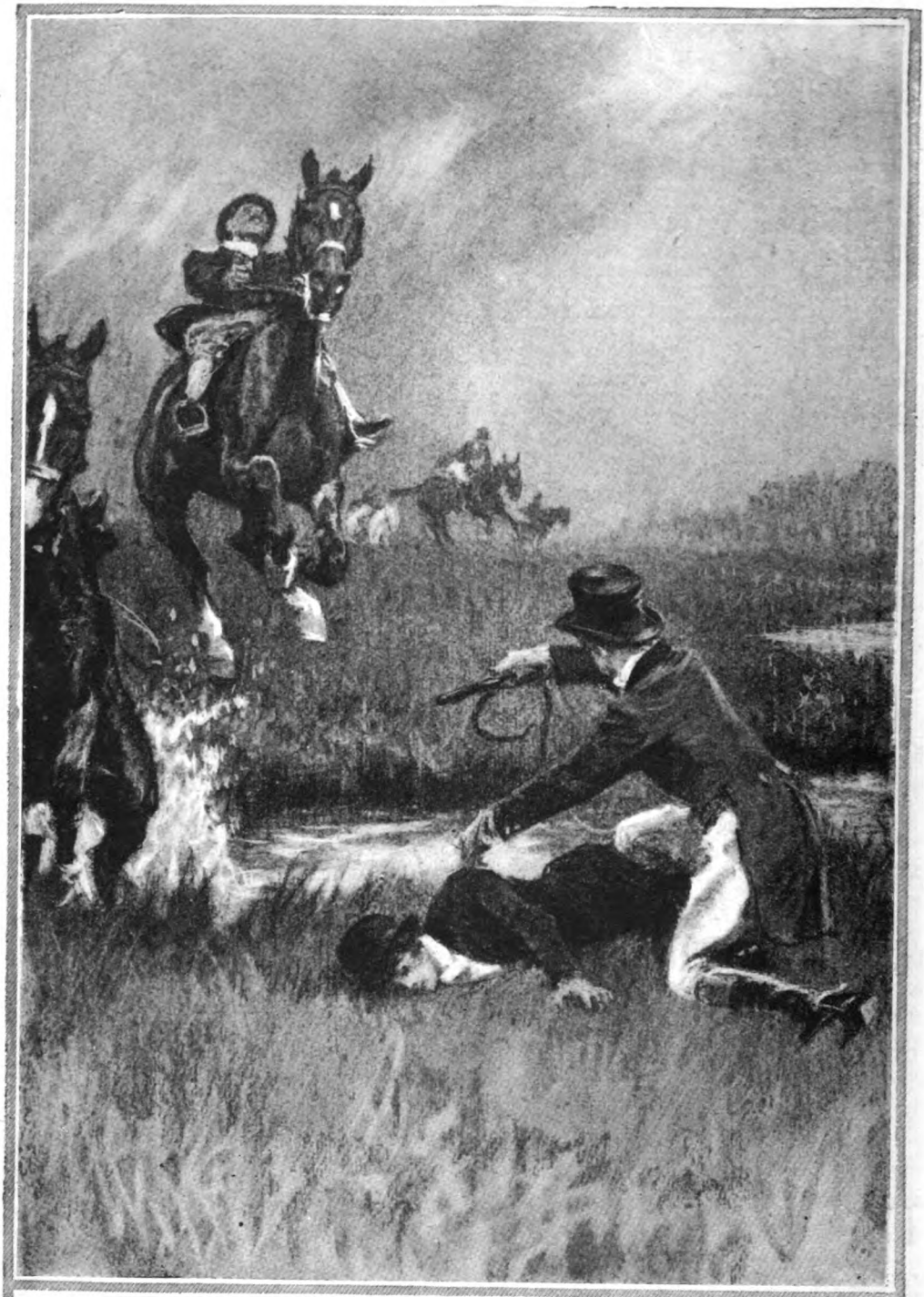

AN AVALANCHE OF YELLOW HORSEFLESH, WITH A WHITE-FACED MAN ATOP OF IT, CAME HURTLING FOR THE BROOK.

(*See page* 13.)

MUSTARD-POT BAILIFFSMAN

by

GILBERT FRANKAU

ILLUSTRATED BY GILBERT HOLIDAY

I.

MY main difficulty in reducing to the language of two-legged humans those many stories which Vic. Lomondham's gigantic gelding snuffles into my receptive ears is the fact that Mustard-Pot, unlike the grey mare, his grazing companion, is somewhat apt—for reasons it seems scarcely necessary to specify—to give me but the vaguest hint of the "love-interest." Moreover—though this is hardly Mustard-Pot's fault, since in that particular section of fox-hunting England where his days are passed the credit-system still flourishes like wicked women or green bay-trees—Mustard-Pot's ideas about money are so vague that when, as in the tale now to be presented, finance plays a part in the plot, I have to fill in largeish gaps purely and solely from my own very moderate imagination.

Which two points having been made clear, I trust that—should it by any chance come before their eyes—both my Lord Pickworth and his Lady, *née* Marigold Somerby, not to mention my friends, the Niggintons, whose management of the Horn and Holla at Rorkton is a model of what hotel-keeping ought to be but very rarely is, will pardon any misstatements, overstatements, or understatements which may perchance have crept into this more or less veracious narrative.

II.

IN the year of Democratic Grace 192—, Lord Pickworth (Pickie to his intimates) was somewhat of an anachronism, being far more akin to that "slap-up Meltonian," his lamented grand-uncle, of whom you will find mention in various indiscreet chronicles of the pre-Victorian port-wine-and-pugilism period, than to his lamentable father, the eighth Earl of Knossington, whose lamentability consisted mainly in a definite refusal to regard Pickie's allowance as a sum to be increased by "supplementary estimates" after the manner of post-war Governmental expenditure.

On an evening in early March, when mating foxes make tremendous points and mating fox-hunters tremendous resolutions to "marry the girl as soon as ever the season finishes," Pickie—a jazz-striped silken dressing-gown swathed negligently about his long, lean body—lay considering this parental lamentability from every angle known to hard-up youth.

"Says he won't part with a bean," mused Pickie, wrinkling up his long, lean, clean-shaven face till he looked like a laughing fox-terrier. "Says he won't part with an oat, let alone a bean," mused Pickie, running his long, lean fingers through his newly-bathed reddish hair till it looked like an O-Cedar mop in a thunderstorm. "Sugar it all, he *must* part with enough to let me pay old Nigginton and get the gee-gees out of pawn," mused Pickie, screwing up his pale-lashed eyelids till he looked like a Chinaman calculating the odds on one, two, three, or four rice-grains remaining from the pile at the fan-tan table. "Because if he don't it's good-byee to little Marigold and me settling down to do the virtuous mater-and-paterfamilias on little Marigold's half-million," mused Pickie, throwing himself back full-length on the very best of Mrs. Nigginton's sofas till the said sofa—Pickie, as already indicated, was of some considerable length—looked like a diminutive settee.

Musing, however, was not much in Pickie's line; and after an unprofitable ten minutes of it, he rose up from the sofa; glanced irresolutely round the tasteful sitting-room; took a spill from the mantelpiece; lit it at the glowing fire; lit the gas (we have no

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electric-light in Rorkton); and rang the bell.

"Mary," said the vision in the silken dressing-gown and red morocco slippers to the cap-and-aproned maid who answered his ringing; "Mary, as a devout Churchwoman will you give me your solemn word that Mrs. Nigginton still refuses to part with a miserable twelve-and-sixpennorth of whisky unless I give you the cash for it?"

"M'lord," stammered the unfortunate Mary, "m'lord, I'm sure *I* don't know. Mrs. Nigginton said—she said—that if your lordship——"

"Enough, Mary, enough!" The mantle of the legislator Knossingtons descended heavily on Pickie's jazz-striped shoulders. "Please tell *Mister* Nigginton that I wish to see him immediately."

The servant fled; and after a little while the discreetest of knocks announced the proprietor of the Horn and Holla.

"Come in, Nigginton," shouted Pickie.

There entered a meek little middle-aged individual, sometime stable-boy and thereafter stud-groom, with a complexion like a stored apple, a ragged brown moustache, the waistcoat of a licensed victualler, and tweed trousers so cunningly cut as to conceal at least half of the bow in Nigginton's legs.

"You sent for me, m'lord," murmured this individual, closing the door noiselessly behind him.

"I did, Nigginton, I did. Take a pew and have a cigarette. Can't offer you a drink, I'm afraid." And Pickie, straddling one of Mrs. Nigginton's very best Chippendale chairs, plunged without delay into the heart of Prohibition.

"Look here, Nigginton," said Pickie, "what I want to know is this: Do you think a man can live without whisky?"

"Well, m'lord"—the proprietor of the Horn and Holla gave vent to a deprecatory cough—"it certainly is difficult. But things being as they are with your account——"

"Never mind my account. That'll get itself settled somehow or other. Besides, the account can wait—my thirst can't."

"I quite realize *that*, m'lord; and if I may make so bold I'd very much appreciate the opportunity of sending your lordship up a bottle of whisky, not as a matter of business but with the compliments of the house."

"Compliments of the house!" Pickie's stare was sheer outraged aristocracy. "What the devil do you mean, Nigginton?"

"Well, m'lord"—Nigginton shifted uneasily on his chair—"you see, m'lord, this trouble about the account, if I may make so bold as to bother your lordship with my private affairs, is none of my making. It's Mrs. Nigginton, m'lord. You'll understand, the hotel being so to speak *her* property, it having been left to her by her father, Mrs. Nigginton has always insisted on looking after the—er—credit side of things herself. Consequently, she having found out that your lordship—if you'll excuse me for saying so, m'lord—owes rather a lot of money round and about Rorkton, Mrs. Nigginton decided——"

"To lock up my gee-gees in those rotten loose-boxes you rook me a fiver a week for; not to let me have a few quid out of the till if I happen to be short of change; and"—Pickie flung his cigarette into the spotless grate—"*and*, Nigginton, to tell her servants to refuse me a trivial twelve-and-sixpennorth of Johnny Walker."

He rose from his chair and began to pace, languidly graceful, up and down the sitting-room.

"It's an outrage, Nigginton," he continued. "A damned outrage. But as it's not your fault——"

The unfinished sentence implied a whole cellarful of soothed dignity; and Mrs. Nigginton's husband, quick to perceive his advantage, rang the bell for Mary, to whom—in the lowered voice of the perpetually henpecked—he confided three hurried sentences and the bunch of keys which issued jingling from his capacious pockets.

"Pre-war, m'lord," announced Mrs. Nigginton's husband when, some ten minutes later, the pair of them resumed their seats at the daffodil-decorated table.

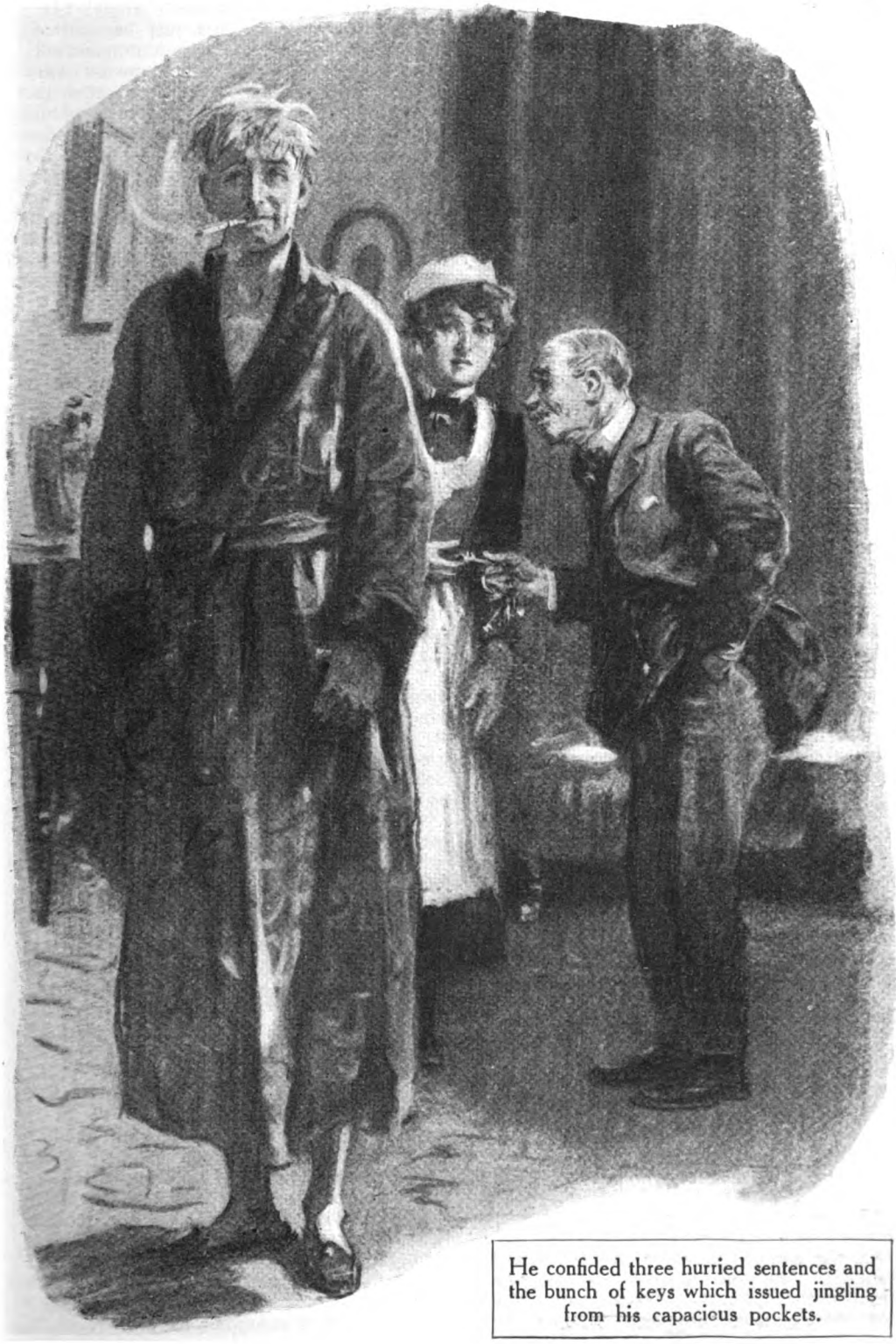
"Very grateful," decided Pickie, putting down his empty glass. "Very grateful and most comforting." Then, pouring himself and his guest yet another three fingers: "Pity about your wife, ain't it, Nigginton?"

"But, m'lord—but really, m'lord"—the meek little man flushed—"seven hundred pounds, if your lordship will excuse the liberty, is rather a tidy lot of credit for one gentleman, even in these days. And then, what with your lordship still owing me for those two horses I sold you, and still owing young Grimes for the three horses *he* sold you, to say nothing of the various other little accounts which your lordship owes round and about Rorkton——"

"I shouldn't worry about the other little accounts if I were you, Nigginton. You've got the gee-gees, and though they may not be worth seven hundred——"

"They aren't, m'lord," retorted Nigginton, truthfully. "And that's why Mrs. Nigginton says that unless and until she gets at least a couple of hundred on account I'm not to let a single one of them go out of the stables—except for exercise, and that then I've got to go with them myself."

Pickie, despite his vexation, could not prevent a smile. After all, it was comic—that is to say, it would have been comic if



He confided three hurried sentences and the bunch of keys which issued jingling from his capacious pockets.

it had happened to anyone other than oneself—for a man to have half-a-dozen first-rate if somewhat green nags, to say nothing of a stud-groom, a groom, and a "help," baited and boarded in the cream of the Shires, without being able, unless one borrowed a ride from one's pals, to do a single day's fox-hunting.

"What I don't understand, Nigginton," he said, at last, "is why your better-half should have suddenly made up her mind that she ain't going to be paid. I've been down here since November, and this is the first time there's been any question about payment."

Nigginton, the stored apple of his face turning tomato before Pickie's astonished eyes, did his best to shirk the question; but after some fencing, and a third three fingers from the pre-war bottle, he managed to stammer a diffident, "Well, m'lord—if your lordship will pardon my boldness—Mrs. Nigginton having heard rumours of your lordship's being engaged to marry a certain young lady——"

Whereupon the Earl of Knossington's second son, with an abrupt reversion to dignity upon which even his father could not have improved, dismissed Nigginton, and retired to dress for dinner.

Dressing, his anger against the innkeeper evaporated. Dressed and strolling along Titmuss Street to dine with the Somerbys, various lines from that fox-hunter's masterpiece, "Loseby Hall" (Pickie didn't know they were a parody of "Locksley Hall," a poem of which he had never heard), floated vaguely through his mind.

"*There my heart shall beat no longer with my passion's foolish throbs,*
I will wed some vulgar woman. She shall rear my race of snobs.
Double-jointed, mutton-fisted, they shall run but they sha'n't ride,
Hunting with the York and Ainsty or the Harriers of Brookside."

"Rather neat, that," mused Pickie. Then:—

"*Tied to one perpetual woman—what to me were soil or clime?*
I who never could endure the same for ten days at a time.
I who held it better to pursue the patriarchal plan
Than tamely to submit to a monopoly of man."

"Very neat, that," mused Pickie. "Devilish applicable—in a way."

All the same, the poem didn't apply to Marigold. Marigold wasn't "vulgar," or "mutton-fisted," or "double-jointed." Marigold was rather a "topper." In fact, if it hadn't been that one didn't intend being forced into marrying her just because old Cuthbert Somerby had half a million and only one daughter—— At which precise point in his musings Pickie recollected that the wedding-boot, Marigold having refused him at least once, and if one counted that time at the Ball twice, was very much on the other leg—a recollection brought home to him with some force when, thoroughly stirred by three glasses of Sir Cuthbert's Bollinger, and two of Sir Cuthbert's Cockburn, he found himself gazing into the minxish brown eyes of Sir Cuthbert's daughter as they practised the new tango on Sir Cuthbert's parquetry.

No! Marigold certainly did not resemble the mythical woman in "Loseby Hall." She was a thoroughbred, every inch of her, from the bobbed brown hair which curled so bewitchingly above her strong white nape to the slim, white-stockinged feet which tripped it so entrancingly over her father's floor. Item, she possessed the reddest, wilfullest mouth, the complexion of a peach, and a figure—— But Pickie couldn't find any simile for Marigold's figure; he could only guide it, gracefully and gratefully, up and down the long drawing-room.

The gramophone to which they had been practising in solitude stopped with a grinding scrape; and Marigold's figure slipped from his grasp.

"I say," he said, pursuing her to the instrument, "let's try that one over again. Jolly tune, I think."

"Do you, Pickie? Well, I don't. I think it's rotten." She took off the record, and closed the case. "Besides, I'm going to bed."

"Going to bed? Why, it isn't eleven yet."

"*I* want to be fit for to-morrow." She faced him, still flushed from her dancing, one hand at her hip. "The pater's going to let me ride Daredevil. You're expected to perform the office of pilot and all that sort of thing."

'I?" Pickie, too, flushed—though not from dancing.

"Even so. You and no other. I meant to break the good news to you over dinner. And the Lord help you if you take a toss, Pickie—for if I don't jump on top of you it won't be Daredevil's fault."

"All nonsense your riding that brute," began a despairing anachronism. "Utter nonsense. He pulls like a steam-engine. He'll pull your arms out. He'll——"

"Oh, no, he won't, not with an Eglinton Pelham."

"Eglinton Pelham!" For a second Pickie forgot his troubles. "Who the deuce told you to ride him in an Eglinton Pelham? What Daredevil wants is a gag."

They spatted amiably about the principles of bitting till Marigold yielded.

"All right," pouted Marigold. "I'll ride him in a gag if you say so. And you'll have to pick up the pieces if he gets away with me. By the way, what fiery steed are you going to bestride?"

"Well—to tell you the truth," began Pickie; but since the truth seemed somewhat too embarrassing, he continued, "I'd rather been thinking it was about time my nags got a rest. What I mean is, I'd rather been considering whether it wouldn't be as well if I didn't hunt to-morrow."

"Didn't hunt!" Marigold's brown eyes glinted. "In March—when every day's *precious*. Didn't hunt! When I've told you—I fancy I made myself more or less clear on the subject, didn't I, Pickie?—that your job to-morrow, the job for which you have been chosen out of *many*"—she stressed that "many," as minxes will—"is to pilot *me*?"

Pickie, picking his way delicately through the rain-drizzle to the Horn and Holla, perpended many things—and not least of them the fact that even if one had her half-million oneself and she not the proverbial bean it would be a "pretty good egg" to marry Marigold—in his anxious heart.

III.

AT fifteen minutes past eight on the following morning—a morning so balmy, so sunlit, so redolent of spring that it seemed as though "March many-weathers" had already given place to April—Mrs. Nigginton, in a crocus-gold jumper and the smartest of tailor-made skirts, issued enormous from the saloon-bar towards the stables of the Horn and Holla, dragging by one unresisting arm her pale and trembling spouse.

"I tell you they *are* gone," ejaculated Mrs. Nigginton, her black eys flashing and her pearl-powdered nose in the air. "Two of them! The only two that are worth anything at all. And he's gone too—at least Mary can't get any answer from him, though she's knocked a dozen times. And it's your fault, Josiah. Your fault and no one else's. I told you those padlocks weren't strong enough."

"He—he'll only have taken them for a day's hunting," stammered Nigginton.

"Hunting! At this time in the morning! That's all you know about it. *He* hasn't taken them out hunting. And if he has, he won't bring them back. Not he. He's too artful for that—as artful as a stableful of jockeys. *Lord* Pickworth!" The female of the species Nigginton sniffed. "A fine sort of a lord. He's a burglar, that's what he is. Owing one seven hundred pounds; and then *stealing* the two *best* horses. They *are* his best horses. You told me so yourself. And now"—a tear suffused her off eye—"now we can whistle for our money."

Arrived at the stables, they found Pickie's badger-faced groom and Pickie's rat-faced help almost speechless with suppressed mirth.

"Yes," said the badger-faced groom. "Oh, yes. He knew his orders. Water and feed at half-past seven after he'd got the keys from Mr. Nigginton. Wait for Mr. Nigginton before he took the horses out for exercise. Those were his lordship's orders; but he, Badger-face, didn't have anything to do with Fireguard and Fireirons. Mr. Deemster, the stud-groom, always looked after them himself. But where *was* Mr. Deemster? Where Fireguard? Where Fireirons? Ah, where indeed! How should he, Badger-face, know! *He* only wanted to get at his own horses—if Mr. Nigginton would kindly oblige with the keys."

"Keys!" Mrs. Nigginton stamped one smartly-brogued foot on the cobbles. "Keys! It seems to me that your sort get on well enough without them." And striding angrily past the shirt-sleeved pair through the opened doorway, she indicated to the following Josiah the two empty loose-boxes, from whose upright bars the snapped padlocks dangled derisive on their useless chains.

"There!" exclaimed Mrs. Nigginton. "There!"

The badger-faced groom sidled in with a grinned, "You'll excuse me, Mrs. Nigginton, but it's high time our horses was watered and fed—not to mention exercised—and I'd be much obliged for them keys."

"You can water them." The artificial silk of the crocus-coloured jumper rustled as Mrs. Nigginton swung on her hips. "And you can feed them—though oats *are* worth their weight in gold. But as for exercising them, NO. Absolutely, NO. Those horses don't leave this yard till the others come back. Give him the keys, Josiah; and wait here till he's finished. Then lock the boxes—and come in to breakfast."

She swept off into the house; and when, some three-quarters of an hour later, Nigginton faced her across the conjugal breakfast-table, there was that in her eye which would have made a stouter man take shelter behind the marmalade-pot.

"I've been finding out things," announced Mrs. Nigginton, folding her table napkin with an air. "He went off before six. Some boys saw him. He was in his red coat! That was why they noticed."

"Then I *was* right. He's only gone hunting."

"Gone to and come back from," pronounced Mrs. Nigginton, "are a very different

pair of shoes. Where is he *now?* Tell me that, Josiah."

"Having breakfast at Saxenham," hazarded Josiah.

"Why Saxenham?"

"Because they're meeting at Thorn's Point—and Saxenham'd be the best place for him to wait for them."

Mrs. Nigginton, gigantic behind the gigantic teapot, pondered this suggestion for thirty weighty seconds. Then, as one who announces Fate, she said: "Josiah, *you* will go to that meet."

"*I?*"

"Yes. You. And what's more, once you get there, you will follow the dogs. Or rather you'll follow this Lord Pickworth."

"Follow *him,*" gasped Josiah. "Him on Fireirons?"

"And why not? You can ride, can't you?" She protruded her crocus-golden bust across the teapot. "You'll follow him, I say—follow him all day if you've got to. And when he's caught the fox—or whatever it is he does do—you'll bring him *and both his horses* home."

"But they're not called dogs and he doesn't catch the fox, and he doesn't ride *both* horses," began Josiah. "Deemster rides one till the change, and then——"

"Never mind Deemster," said Mrs. Nigginton, Napoleonically, "and never mind *details.* Your job is to bring Lord Pickworth and both his animals back to *my* stables before it gets dark. Now run upstairs and get your breeches on while I tell the ostler to saddle you a horse."

"But, damn it, we haven't got a horse. Not one fit to take out."

"Oh, yes, we have. There's that yellow animal you bought from Sid Harrison——"

"Him!" The apple of Josiah's face blanched to onion-colour. "But he's a bolter. Sid told me so after I'd bought him."

"Sid Harrison always was a liar." Josiah's spouse smiled philosophically. "But if he happens to have spoken the truth for once in his life, so much the better; because from what I've heard about the way this Lord Pickworth rides, a bolter is just the very thing you want to keep up with him."

"My grief!" said Josiah Nigginton; and as, abandoning the shelter of the marmalade-pot, he fled upstairs to the conjugal bedroom: "My purple grief!"

IV.

AT fifteen minutes to eleven, still on the identical morning, there issued from under the archway of the Horn and Holla a horse butter-saffron of hue and so vast of height that the bowler-hat of the unhappy man whose stumpy canvas-gaitered legs bestrode him barely escaped being stove in against the lintel. This horse, moreover, as it walked sedately over the tarmac past the pork butcher's emporium of George Somers was immediately recognized by Mrs. Somers, who left the counter and called to his rider: "Good-morning, Mr. Nigginton. And when did you buy The Yellow Peril?"

"Last week," retorted the rider. "And that's not his name."

"It was once." Wren Belton's daughter laughed. "What is it now?"

"Butter-pat."

"Well, you mind Butter-pat doesn't run away with you—that's all."

But Josiah, fresh from Mrs. Josiah's last instructions ("Now whatever you do, don't lose sight of *him*"), was beyond caring whether his horse ran away or not. "He can bolt to Turkey for all I care," muttered Mrs. Nigginton's husband. Then, perpending the matrimonial multiplications of the Turks, "Well, not exactly Turkey."

All the same, he couldn't quite believe Sid's tale about the bolting. The saffron horse, even when they came to the railway-crossing and an unexpected express thundered by, seemed thoroughly sedate. Rather a well-made sort of a horse he seemed, too, now that he'd been clipped. A bit thin, of course—as one would expect of a nag that had been "roughed off" at Sid Harrison's for the best part of twelve months.

"Soon cure you of that, my pet," murmured Josiah, "and then you'll be just the mark for one of the real toffs."

He patted the scrawny neck, and trotted on, calculating his profit on the twenty pounds he had invested in Butter-pat, towards the meet. Trotting, his spirits rose. A day off from Mrs. N., all said and done, was a day off from Mrs. N. His lordship—a good enough lad, if a bit gay—could be trusted to falsify Mrs. N.'s suspicions on his own. "Sha'n't worry about him," mused released Josiah.

Butter-pat (better known as Mustard-Pot) jogged on, and after a while they overhauled two other bowler-hatted horsemen, crops thonged over shoulder, each mounted astride, one leading a black and the other a brown, both side-saddled.

"Morning, John," greeted Nigginton.

"Morning, Josiah." Sir Cuthbert Somerby's stud-groom stared. "Don't often see you out nowadays. Where the devil did you find that canary-coloured elephant?"

"Never you mind his colour, John."

"I don't; but Daredevil does. Here, stow that, you old ass." For the led black, her eyes glinting wickedly, had begun to play up. "She's a pig," confided the stud-groom. "But she's a rare 'un to go."

"Your young lady riding her?" asked Nigginton.

"Yes."

"She's a rare 'un to go, too."

"She is that," admitted the stud-groom; but when Josiah, pumping discreetly, tried to find out if there were any truth in the rumour of his young mistress's engagement to the elusive Pickie, he countered with a non-committal, "Well, some says they are and some says they aren't. I'll believe it when I see it in the papers."

By now the three of them were almost at the Point; and Nigginton, steering his careful way among that conglomeration of led horses, pony-carts, cars, pedestrians, scarlet-clad thrusters, blue-clad thrustresses, kids on bicycles, policemen on duty, postmen off duty, farm-hands, farmers' wives, horse-copers, and hobbledehoys which is a Saturday's field in Leicestershire, began to wonder whether his new purchase had ever been in the hunting-field before. "Takes it pretty calm," thought Nigginton.

For Mustard-Pot, not having the foggiest notion what this vast concourse might portend, appeared unutterably bored. He dropped his head to the roadside grass and grazed like a sheep while his rider—all fears forgotten—watched the Saxenham road; down which, merrily jig-jogging, came the pack, and following the pack—his polished topper at an inconceivable angle, his white-breeched knees cocked jockey-wise above the saddle-flaps, his red coat speckless and his top-boots shining like mirrors, a laugh in his eyes and a cigarette at the corner of his mouth—Pickie.

Mustard-Pot cocked his ears as the pack rippled by, but displayed no further interest. Pickie, on Fireirons, called a derisive, "Morning, Nigginton. How's the wife?" And Deemster, following on Fireguard, pulled up alongside.

"Keeping an eye on the pledges, Josiah?" grinned the immaculate Deemster. "Because, if so, you'll have your job cut out. It's a rare day for scent; and if we find a straight-necked one you ought to see a bit of sport."

V.

PICKIE, cantering at Marigold's side towards the draw, made an almost identical remark. He was, truth to tell, rather pleased with his talents as a stable-breaker; extremely pleased with Fireirons, whose grey ears he kept on leaning forward to caress; and more, far more than pleased with the as yet uncaressed Marigold—a perfect picture of equestrian girlhood on her dancing Daredevil. Nevertheless, there abode one tiny fly in Pickie's ointment of joy—and that fly was the presence of Nigginton.

"A chap," mused Pickie, "don't want to be reminded about hotel-bills and that sort of thing when he's hunting foxes over the best bit of country in the world with the best little girl who ever sat in a side-saddle. One don't want skeletons at the feast when——"

But at that precise moment—with half the field still bunched at the gate behind and the other half still chattering—Thorn's Point rang sudden to a terrific burst of hound-music; and before Huntsman Rogers (whose Saturday habit it is to give his field the slip if he can, and so avoid his pack being trampled to death by wild sportsmen) could think of any method to baffle his three hundred oppressors, a fox—the largest, reddest dog-fox Pickie had ever seen—snaked his way out of covert and, setting his mask for Saxenham Ruffs, went away like blazes over the ridge-and-furrow.

Followed, in full cry, so close to that dog-fox's brush that it seemed a miracle if he could escape, sixteen couple of the best little bitches in England; followed Rogers, hoping to God that "the Master would keep 'em back"; then the Master, who knew he had about as much chance of keeping 'em back as a boy-scout of stopping a cavalry-charge; then Pickie, the fly in the ointment forgotten; then Marigold, doing her best to prevent Daredevil cutting down Fireirons; then some fifty first-flighters determined to leap or die; and lastly—strung out like wild-ducks over half a parish—the remainder of the astonished field.

The first three fences—and for this Rogers, half his mind with his red fox and half with his red pursuers, thanked several stars—were good solid timber. Looking back as he bounded over the third of them he saw, even as he had expected, the fifty first-flighters thin—by that mysterious magnetism which draws gallopers gatewards—to a bare two dozen. "And there won't be many of those left at this bat," thought Rogers, looking comforted at his untrampled hounds.

For the pace—even Pickie admitted to himself as he gathered Fireirons between his knees and rammed him over an oxer—was a cracker-jack. Already, hounds led horses by half a mile, and were still gaining. Already, landing beyond that oxer, he knew that, unless they checked at The Ruffs, not half-a-dozen of the boldest would be up at the finish. And "Great!" thought Pickie, looking back over one shoulder to see Daredevil balance herself in full career and pop over like a grasshopper.

Yet greater still it seemed to Pickie when two-and-thirty of the best little bitches in England gave The Ruffs the go-by and flashed on, carrying such a head as only sporting poets dream of, across the cream of the country towards Little Overdine.

"Ripping!" called Marigold.

Now it was steeplechase or die, with only the dozen of 'em in it; and Pickie, crouched on his saddle, had forgotten even Marigold. The grass fled under Fireirons's hoofs; the fences fled under Fireirons's belly; the wind whistled between Fireirons's ears till his rider could scarcely see which way hounds ran. But Daredevil would not be denied; and as he swished the worst of the raspers, Marigold—fencing in style—drew alongside her pilot.

"Ripping!" called Marigold.

"Run of the season!" called back Pickie.

Four fields ahead they saw Rogers's scarlet top the fence at crest-line and disappear. A field to their right, they saw the Master, taking his own line, two bold women, and a sporting farmer. Behind them, they heard the thud-thud-thud of other gallopers. Then they saw the Master's chestnut peck over a cut-and-laid, recover, gallop on; saw the sporting farmer somersault headlong into a ditch; saw the two bold women clear ditch with somersaulter; and eased a little of their own pace up the slope over which Huntsman Rogers had disappeared with his pack.

"Where's he making for?" asked Marigold—and the voice was a little breathless in her throat.

"Spaxton's," retorted Pickie, "if they don't kill him first"; and pulling to a fast trot, for the last ridge-and-furrow up to the crest was steeper than angry seas, he glanced sideways at her wind-flushed face. Glancing, it flashed through his mind that—money or no money—he *must* marry her. "After all," he thought, "what's money? Dross! Dross for Niggintons."

They reached the crest; and Daredevil, fresh from the tiny breather, caught hold of her bit. Hareing after, over the lowest of blackthorns, Pickie caught a glimpse of Little Overdine, red in the vale below.

"Run of the season!" called back Pickie.

Rogers and his hounds, a mile ahead now, were still this side of the Little Overdine road. "Catch 'em here or catch 'em nowhere," thought Pickie; and he tapped Fireirons once with his whip so that she passed Dare-devil in three terrific strides and fairly flew down the long fenceless slope. "Damn *all* Niggintons," thought Pickie, "this is the life." Then, turning head back to see how Marigold was faring, he gave one astonished gasp.

"Hallucinations," gasped Pickie; "hallucinations."

He looked again; gasped again; tapped again — none too gently — at Fireirons's striding shoulders. For the thing, the horrid thing of his perceiving, was no hallucination. It was Care: Care garbed not in the fox-hunter's scarlet but—even as the poet tells us—in the black of a second horseman: Black Care, personified by Nigginton.

At that horrid sight imagination, for once in a way, got the better of an Anglo-Saxon. Josiah and Josiah's horse—Pickie's equine memory could no more doubt that butter-coloured steed than his newly-awakened conscience could doubt Nigginton—had just topped the crest-line. He saw them galloping in pursuit—in pursuit of him, Pickie, the picker of padlocks, the stealer of horseflesh. And, "I mustn't be caught," thought the panicked Pickie, "I mustn't be caught—not on Fireirons—not on a stolen horse."

He hared on, his mind a whirl, the fly in his ointment swollen suddenly elephant. For if he *were* caught, then—then Marigold would know him for what he was, for a horse-thief, the kind of chap whom revolvered men (in the type of literature which fed Pickie's artless soul) strung up in the nearest tree-clump.

They were passing such a tree-clump—it happened to be that "Elm-Ring" which abuts on the Little Overdine road—now; and Pickie, looking back once again, was

aware of the girl he loved racing to be level with him, while behind her, barely two hundred yards behind, his face set like grim death, rode the Terror of the Horse-Thieves (three-and-sixpence net, at all bookstalls).

VI.

AND "Woa—woa, for the love of Moses," wailed the Terror of the Horse-Thieves, even that Nigginton who, willy-nilly, was carrying out his wife's instructions to the absolute letter.

Poor Nigginton! He knew those fences in and out of the Little Overdine Road; knew also that, three fields beyond the road, Little Overdine Brook foamed broad as the English Channel between poached and rotten banks. Surely those present fences, that present Brook, were enough to stop any bolter foaled of mare. Surely the past, the awful fence passed, would content the maniacal soul of this maniacal Butter-pat.

All those passed fences, all the awful ditches he had glimpsed in flying them, all the ridges and all the furrows whereover Mustard-Pot (no other name suits him as he went that day) had borne him terror-stricken, went flashing like some crazy movie through Josiah's mind as the elms of Elm-Ring went flashing by his devoted head. He even realized, as dying men are said to realize their whole lives, the whole disaster; how Mustard-Pot, jammed in the gateway at Thorn's Point, had seen hounds break cover and Rogers following; how Mustard-Pot, as though suddenly grown wise to fox-hunting, had barged headstrong through the gateway (nearly barging one of Nigginton's best customers to his doom); how Mustard-Pot, barging no longer but headstrong as ever, his great ears twitching and his great hocks working like pistons, had given one snort as he darted through the scurryers beyond the gateway; and then bolted, heedless of bit, heedless of objurgation, heedless of timber, heedful only of the horses ahead—bolted like a stallion possessed of seven hundred devils, in pursuit of the leading twelve. Wherefore, so weary that his hands might have been a baby's on Mustard-Pot's reins, and so blown that his voice might have been the wail of the wind in Mustard-Pot's ears, the Terror of the Horse-Thieves gasped one final "Woa," and seizing the martingale-strap awaited his end.

His eyes, as that end drew near, were wise to the grey Fireirons gathering himself for the upspring, to Pickie's scarlet lofted high over hornbeam, to Marigold's Daredevil leaping side by side with Fireirons; his ears, as Mustard-Pot balanced himself for one fractional second, caught the clop of hoofs galloping across macadam; and his soul, all that was left of it, sent up one voiceless prayer to the gods of the chase that they should save his head from the hard high road. Then Mustard-Pot's hocks hurled Mustard-Pot's forehand skywards—hornbeam vanished under—Mustard-Pot landed on turf at roadside—white road vanished with hornbeam—and Mustard-Pot, up-ending sea-saw-wise, leaped clean to turf again.

"Saved!" thought Josiah. "Saved by Butter-pat and the living jingo." And at that thought, the sporting instinct, so long overlaid by his ponderous spouse, stirred once more to life under his claret-coloured waistcoat, so that he rose in his stirrups and halloed—halloed with the last of his breath.

No hound, no huntsman heard that hallo—only Pickie, Pickie still panic-stricken, racing as men race in nightmares from a phantom foe. "Caught," thought Pickie; "caught." And he lifted the tiring Fireirons over the ultimate timber, marvelling, despite his panic, how Daredevil and her rider should have lived through such a gruelling.

But the end of the gruelling was not yet. Five hundred yards ahead, hidden still but none the safer for its hiding, flowed the trickiest obstacle in all the Shires. Beyond it, up the green slope to Little Overdine, Rogers—his hounds caught at last—was capping them on.

"The Brook!" shouted Pickie. "Overdine Brook! Can do it, Marigold?"

"Must do—can't stop her," called back the galloping Marigold; and just as she called, Nigginton, almost level with them, halloed again.

"Damn it," Pickie's spurs found horse-flesh, "damn it, I won't be caught."

Sweat-sodden Fireirons sprang from the spur; sweat-sodden Daredevil sprang to be level with him; and behind them, foam-flecked from nose to tail-tip, losing ground with every rocking stride, Mustard-Pot summoned the last of his strength, the last of his breath, to make up his distance.

And now, suddenly, they saw the gleam of muddy water; and now, suddenly, Pickie's panic left him, and now, eyes, brain, limbs, every fibre of his mind and body concentrated across the Brook. "Steady," he called to Marigold, "go steady—pick your place."

But he might as well have called to a comet; for Daredevil, the gag between her teeth, went down the last of the slope like a charging cheetah, and was already on her hocks and in mid-air, a second before his own legs closed with a vice-grip on the saddle-flaps.

Even as Fireirons rose Pickie knew, with the utter certainty which is finest horsemanship, that the Brook had beaten Fireirons, beaten Daredevil; that they were in for a spill, for the spill of a lifetime. Even as Daredevil's fore-feet plunked to mud and

Marigold shot headlong, he knew Fireirons would only miss Daredevil by inches. Even as the grey blundered and sank backwards, his knees loosed their vice-grip and he fell clear, on the far bank, less than a yard from the fallen Marigold.

He was up in a second, up and kneeling by the prostrate girl. But before his outstretched hand touched her shoulder; while yet his eyes dithered and his ears buzzed from the pace of his toss, an avalanche—an avalanche of yellow horseflesh with a white-faced man atop of it—came hurtling for the Brook.

There was no time to shout, no time to pray. Pickie did what man could, did it automatically, flinging himself down on top of Marigold and waiting, waiting all through that hundredth part of a second which can be eternity, for the spine-breaking crash of the yellow horse's fore-hoofs.

But no crash came, only—or so it seemed to the war-trained Pickie—the noise of a huge shell bursting on impact and, following the shell-burst, deluge—a deluge of mud and water from which he realized, as men realize miracles, that the yellow horse must have swerved in its leaping.

He rose to his knees as the deluge subsided. There, at the Brook, five good yards downstream from Daredevil and Fireirons, Mustard-Pot—stifle-high in oozing mud—was struggling desperately for foothold. There, at the Brook, five good yards from struggling Mustard-Pot, Josiah Nigginton—watchchain-high in mud-brown waters—was wading desperately for safety. "Sorry, your lordship, sorry," spluttered the wading Josiah.

Pickie, however, did not deign the splutterer even a curse; for Marigold, suddenly stirring, opened her eyes—so that the splutterer, wading somehow to land, saw his lordship lift her head very tenderly to his white-breeched knee, and lifting . . .

. . . But that which Mrs. Nigginton's husband saw—"a kiss worth every bit of seven hundred quid to me and the missus"—is no more for publication than my friend Mustard-Pot's rambling account of how it took most of the afternoon and most of Farmer Thompson's cart-horses to drag him, Daredevil, and Fireirons out of the mire, or Silver Glory's scornful comment that *she* 'took the rotten little ditch as it ought to be taken—not too slow nor yet too fast," and so was the only mare to see Huntsman Rogers roll "Charlie" over in Little Overdine churchyard.

Don't talk to me about fishermen—the worst worm-and-fly liar would be a George Washington in a fox-hunting village!

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 108.

In either, or in neither, of two lands,
On railway, river, and the sea it stands.

1. Look down below the level of your feet
   To find the complement of Water Street.
2. Professionally one is treated here,
   And same will, rightly rearranged, appear.
3. Let gage appear of other hue than green,
   Fair ladies closely linked there may be seen.
4. Easy it ought to be to find the place;
   You ought to turn it up, if such the case.
5. What sounds as though 'twere meant in very deed?
   A shorter synonym we here should read.
6. Honey and milk, no doubt, he used to take;
   Tea in a can would not be hard to make.
7. These may suggest it: Ferry, heather, rocks,
   Covenant, silver button, uncle, fox.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 108 *should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor,* THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on July* 11*th.*

Two answers may be sent to every light.

It is essential that solvers, with their answers to this acrostic, should send also their real names and addresses.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 107.

(The Third of the Series.)

Love in a forest, heroines disguised,
By Stratford's famous son immortalized.

1. Within the Zodiac the ram is fixed.
2. A man, of three; one fish, another mixed.
3. King, mourned by poet, loses tail and head.
4. From city, bark, or toil one fourth has fled.
5. Now should the very last of all appear.
6. See fifty sheep. And hundreds more are near.
7. So can we march. Part of the foot we see.
8. Here, captain, boil the water for our tea.
9. No quadruped, though such his name implies.
10. Muscles or brains he hates to exercise.
11. Take creature, county, and fair heroine,
    Six-lettered each, halve, add: our word is seen.

PAX.

1.	A	rie	S
2.	S	hadrac	H
3.	Y	cid	A
4.	O	r	K
5.	U	ltimat	E
6.	L	ewe	S
7.	I	nste	P
8.	K	ettl	E
9.	E	li	A
10.	I	dle	R
11.	T	welv	E

NOTES.—Light 2. Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego; shad, char. 3. Edward King, Milton's Lycidas. 4. York, cork, work. 6. L., fifty; ewes. South Downs, noted for sheep. 8. Captain Kettle. 9. Lamb. 11. Kitten, Tyrone, Oenone; ten, one, one; added, twelve.

Seventeen of the answers to No. 105 had no pseudonym appended to them.

Solvers who write to the Acrostic Editor and desire answers to their queries should, with their letters, enclose a stamped addressed envelope, and he will endeavour to reply.

HE BRACED HIS SHOULDER TO THE STRAIN,
HE CAUGHT HER AS SHE SANK, ALL SPENT,
AND WITH HER BALANCED TURNED AGAIN
TO MAKE HIS TERRIBLE DESCENT.

"NOW THEN, SMITH!"

by

A. CONAN DOYLE

[The incident referred to actually occurred after the earthquake at Messina.]

'TWAS on Messina's day of wrath,
When one wild morning laid her low,
On either side of that grey path
The cinder piles were still aglow.
Down it there sauntered Skipper Wise,
The Master of the *Roderic Dhu*,
And at his heels, with wondering eyes,
A dozen of her collier crew.

But hark that cry! Above their heads
There hung a riven, shaking wall;
From bulging base to melting leads
Was sheer a hundred foot of fall;
And there, half-balanced on a sill,
There clung a little frightened maid,
Her white face staring down, and still
She waved her hand and cried for aid.

The Skipper cocked his thumb in air,
"Now then, Smith!" he curtly said.
The seaman marked the child up there,
And growled an oath and scratched his head.

They saw him wet his horny paw,
They saw him test the shaking wall,
They saw him creep from flaw to flaw,
They saw him slip, they saw him fall;
And yet again regain his grip
And find a crevice for his stand,
And on with jerk and spring and slip,
Until he clutched the downstretched hand.

He braced his shoulder to the strain,
He caught her as she sank, all spent,
And with her balanced turned again
To make his terrible descent;
With pause for thought and pause for breath,
While the dark rabble prayed and cried,
Until from that high place of death
He bore her to her mother's side.

"Now then, Smith!" the Skipper said,
And at the word the thing was done.
But where is Smith, whose hand and head
Has played a match with death and won?
He's just a chap among the chaps,
Unknown, unhonoured, as before,
And there he'll stay until, perhaps,
The world has need of him once more.

So has it been in every age,
In every age it still shall be;
Smith's name is not on history's page,
But who has made that page save he?
The Warrior Chief can frame his plan
With all that wisdom can devise,
And then—ah, then it needs the man,
And "Now then, Smith!" he loudly cries.

The Statesman in a parlous place
May totter on unstable ground,
His blunders rise before his face,
And no redemption may be found;
When all is lost, 'mid doubts and fears,
There's one more card that he can play.
It's "Now then, Smith!" and Smith appears
To save him for some later day.

And when War raised its fearsome shape
And Europe shrank before its form,
Our England stood with no escape,
Unarmed before the rising storm.
'Twas Smith to whom at once we turned.
Five million Smiths obeyed the call.
To Smith the praise that he has earned,
For by his blood he saved us all.

Now then, Smith!
You're neither rich nor gifted,
But here's a job that must be done,
A job we may not shirk.
Now then, Smith!
Get down to it and shift it!
You're just the common working bee,
So work, you beggar, work!

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ANIMALS AS MOTHERS

by J. Arthur Thomson M.A., LL.D.

Regius Professor of Natural History in the University of Aberdeen.

IN some of the tribes of Central Africa the mother carries the young child on her back or on her side all the day long. As she works in the field, or milks the cows, or goes about the hut, she has the baby always with her, and the child often clutches hard. So some of the opossums that have no pouch carry their young ones about with them, the tail of the youngster curled like a tendril round the tail of the mother. Sometimes there are six young ones holding on to their mother—a cheerful crew. How different from this—and yet the same—is the sight of the hippopotamus in the Nile with a youngster astride her neck. The mother-monkey often carries her child from tree to tree, and the father sometimes gives her a rest by taking his turn.

The opossums carry their young about with them, the tails of the youngsters curled like a tendril round the tail of the mother. [*Photo.* [*Bond.*

CARRYING THE YOUNG ONES ABOUT.

Still more daring is the mother-bat, who flies in mid-air with her offspring clutching her breast with its thumbs and closing its tiny front teeth on the curiously roughened hair. It is hardly necessary to say that the bat has rarely more than one offspring at a time. One is enough for a flying mother to carry about; and the small number also indicates plainly that bats are very safe in the struggle for existence. In the case of typical marsupials like kangaroos the young ones are born in a very helpless state, as it were prematurely, and the mother stows them away in an external skin-pocket which develops round about the milk-glands. She manages to get the mouth of each young one over a teat, which then swells a little, and as the young one is at first unable to suck, the mother by means of special musculature injects the milk into its mouth. One might think that the milk would sometimes "go down the wrong way" and drown the offspring, but there is an interesting adaptation to prevent this. The glottis or opening of the windpipe is shunted forward to meet the posterior opening of the nasal passage, so that air is borne along a continuous tube to the lungs, and the milk is kept to its proper place—the gullet. By and by the young marsupial gains strength, it pokes its head out of the pocket and looks around, it jumps out altogether, it clambers in again when danger threatens—an altogether quaint performance.

In illustration of maternal care among animals it is natural to begin with carrying the young ones about after birth, for this is a sort of prolongation of what is true of many mother-animals, that they carry the young ones about *before* birth. This "viviparity" is characteristic of mammals, but it is also seen in some reptiles, such as the adder, in some amphibians like the Alpine salamander, in some fishes like the viviparous blenny, in insects like green flies, in the primitive Peripatus (linking worms to insects), which carries its young for about a year before birth, and so on downwards to simple creatures like some of the sea-anemones. But even among animals that lay eggs which are hatched outside of the body, there is often a carrying about of the youngsters.

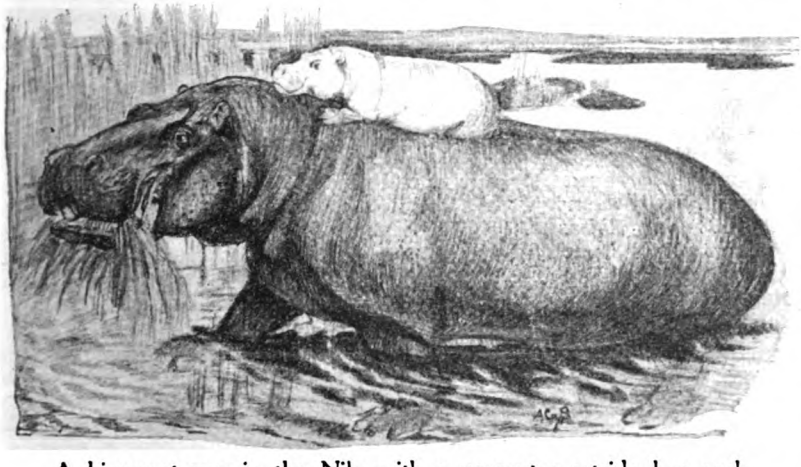
The Surinam toad has a big family in skin cradles on her back: the father sea-horse carries his family in a big breast-pocket. The young crayfishes shelter under their mother's tail and hang on as she swims, and the brook-leech, so common under stones, has often a family clinging on beneath.

There is no hard-and-fast line between carrying the eggs about and carrying the young ones. In one crustacean the eggs are sheltered in a brood pouch and the young ones swim away as soon as they can, the mother paying no heed. In another crustacean, not distantly related, the young ones return to the protection of their mother after they have made excursions on their own. The wolf-spider Lycosa carries her eggs in a cocoon, and after the young ones are hatched they cling to her body in "a squirming mass." Professor Holmes says that she gives them no particular attention, and that "it is doubtful whether her maternal care goes farther than a good-natured tolerance of her living burden." But it is probably safe to say that maternal care has one of its roots in prolonged attachment between mother and young.

[Photo.] A baby kangaroo with its mother. [Bond.

GUARDING THE EGGS.

When an animal can carry its eggs or its young ones about with it, that is making sure. "Only sheer force will take them from me," the mother says; "I will die rather than give them up." But it is often impossible to carry the family about, so we naturally pass to cases where the eggs are laid and guarded. Even in the same order—*e.g.*, spiders—the two methods may be illustrated. As we rest on a summer holiday among the heather we may see a mother-spider hurrying past with her cocoon held beneath her body and sometimes bound to her by silken threads. This cocoon is very different from the silken bag which a caterpillar makes around itself when it is going to change into a moth; the cocoon of a spider is a silken bag made by the mother to hold the eggs and by and by the young ones. Some spiders, as we have just said, carry the cocoon about and will not readily let it go, but others leave it in a more or less safe place. The bramble-leaves are sometimes bound together with silk, and if we open them gently we find inside a silken cocoon or, it may be, several. Other kinds are hidden under loose stones or bark. We have found a pretty one which is not hidden at all, but is hung like a white bell, closed at the mouth, from a twig of heather. But our point is this, that in addition to making the cocoon and carefully disposing of it, the mother-spider sometimes remains beside it, guarding it vigilantly. The true water-spider, Argyroneta, with her sub-aquatic web in the shelter of which she deposits her eggs, is not content to leave them there, but watches them with diligence. The trap-door spider sinks a shaft in the earth, plasters the interior smoothly, and makes a lid of clay with a silken hinge—all for the sake of the bunch of eggs stowed away in a far corner. But she is not content to leave them; in some cases at least she remains on guard and holds the trap-door shut!



A hippopotamus in the Nile with a youngster astride her neck.

There is a strange animal, called Galeodes, a distant relative of spiders and scorpions, that lives in dry places in warm countries and is very poisonous. In the case of the species that frequents the steppes of Turkestan, we are told that the mother excavates a shaft, mostly horizontal, in the ground, and

lays about a hundred eggs in its recess. These hatch out in a couple of days, having been developing beforehand within the mother's body; but the young ones are not strong enough to face the outer world. So the mother mounts guard in the hole, and stays there fasting for five weeks. Then she lets her family go, and has a well-deserved meal. There is no end to these stories.

THE MATERNAL OCTOPUS.

One does not associate an octopus or devil-fish with the gentler virtues, but this is mere prejudice. The mother attaches her eggs to a substratum, and she returns to them at intervals to squirt water over them from her funnel. They are, of course, always bathed in the sea-water, but the forceful squirting drives off particles of mud and also promotes good aeration. This is a particularly interesting custom, for it occurs again among the quite unrelated true fishes. Thus the cock-paidle splashes energetically with his gill-cover and occasionally with his tail about the bunch of eggs deposited in a corner of the shore-pool. In this case, however, it is the father that is so strenuous.

We like to dwell on cases where the mother or the father lingers about the place where the eggs have been deposited. It suggests another root—or should we say bud?—of parental affection. We see it among fishes, amphibians, and reptiles, and does it not point on to brooding? The slippery gunnel or butter-fish on the seashore curves its body round the bunch of eggs; the male nurse frog has the cluster of eggs fastened to his hind limbs and remains quietly with them in the mud, going into the water occasionally to bathe; how gradually one is led on to the python, which anticipates the birds in actually brooding—encircling the eggs in its massive coils.

NESTING.

Everyone associates nests with birds, but the nesting habit has a much wider range. It is a "mothering" adaptation, tending to secure the safety of young ones that are at first relatively helpless. Mr. Hudson tells us that when the shepherds are moving a great flock of sheep from one part of the Argentine Pampa to another a lamb may be dropped by the way. The mother rests a little, the newborn lamb staggers to its feet and has a drink, and long before the flock has passed the two of them are able to join in. Everyone has seen how quickly a foal is able to totter along beside its solicitous mother—a useful quality in animals that originally lived as nomads on the plains. In such cases there is obviously no need of nesting, but we have only to pass to the not distantly related deer to find cases where the young are unable to move about for several days after birth. The mother hides her offspring in the thicket, and this is half-way to a nest.

Amongst the branches of the tree, or where the main stem forks, the squirrel makes a large nest of moss and twigs, and there the young are nurtured. The nest is often conspicuous, for the squirrel has few enemies. It might be said that the squirrel's nest differs from a bird's nest since the mother squirrel does not brood, but that is a distinction without much difference, since there are long quiet times of suckling the young. Should danger be very pressing, in the shape of a woodman, for instance, the mother may shift her young, carrying one at a time in her mouth.

Of nests at lower levels than birds and mammals—*nests without brooding*—there are many instances: the tree-frog's leaf-nest suspended above the water and with a floor that gives way at the appropriate moment, the nest made by the male stickleback for the eggs of his several wives, the stone-nest of the lampreys in the river, the hanging paper nest of certain wasps, the nest of the humble-bee in the mossy bank. But we must not be led off on this interesting side-track.

SAFETY FIRST.

There is great variety in the ways in which the safety of the young is secured. The fact seems to be that the well-being of the young is to the mothers as preoccupying a problem as self-preservation. Unlike the rabbit, which secures safety by burrowing, and brings forth its young at a blind and naked stage, the common hare has her resting-place on a site from which she can get visual, auditory, and olfactory news of the country round about. But how effective is the simple device of taking a long leap out of the "form" and into it again on her return from feeding, *for thus the scent is broken*. A hare has usually two leverets, for the sake of which she will fight and best the weasel. If the fox is beginning to find out her home she will shift the youngsters by night, and some authorities say that when the mother has four leverets instead of two, she takes two of them to a second "form," not risking all her eggs in one basket! In a sense it is fair to call the rabbit a nest-maker, for there is a bed in the burrow that is made comfortable with the rabbit's own wool, and there the young ones are born. Our point is simply that the hare—the rabbit's first cousin—attains the same end of family-safety by means altogether different.

PREPARING FOR THE YOUNG.

Every nest-making is a more or less clear anticipation of what the young ones will require, but among insects there is often a much more elaborate preparation. One

example must suffice. The Sphex wasp makes her burrow in the bank, she deposits an egg in a recess, she sets off to find provender, she meets a cricket and stings it twice in a ventral nerve centre so that it is paralysed, she drags it to the mouth of the burrow and lays it down for a moment while she dives into the earth to see that there has been no intrusion or interference she comes up again and deftly pulls in her booty, she lays it beside the egg, reascends, and flies away. The same thing is done again and again, and then the mother dies. When the Sphex grubs are hatched, they find fresh meat—the paralysed crickets—close at hand. The whole chain of events has now become securely enregistered in the brain of the Sphex wasp; it is a chain of instinctive actions; and there can be no clear anticipation of what the Sphex mother has never seen, namely, her offspring. There can be little doubt, however, that the instinctive custom was established ages ago when the mother Sphex *did* survive to see her offspring, and that there was in the establishment of the instinct a degree of awareness that has long since been lost. The tyranny of the maternal instinct is well illustrated by Fabre's experiment of removing the cricket while the Sphex was reconnoitring underground. She came up, missed her booty, searched for it, found it, dragged it to the mouth of the burrow, laid it down, dived in, and came up again—only to find that the cricket had been stolen once more. This happened forty times in succession; a ray of active intelligence—which the Sphex does not lack—would have broken the spell!

Should danger threaten, the squirrel removes her young, carrying one at a time in her mouth.

STRANGE CASES.

In some countries, such as Madagascar, the mother crocodile buries her eggs a couple of feet in the loose soil, where fermenting vegetable matter aids the sun in sustaining a temperature suitable for development. This burying means safety, but it must be awkward for an air-breathing animal to be born beneath the ground! What happens is this: the mother does not go far off, and when the young crocodile is ready to be hatched it utters a piping cry—a signal, all unbeknownst, which the parent understands. She digs down and the young crocodiles are not buried alive.

What a strange book is opened when we inquire into the different ways in which wasps deal with their young ones—some providing stores before the eggs are hatched, some bringing their offspring fresh food every day, and some putting a brew of chewed insects into the mouth of the grub and asking back in return a drop of salivary juice—which seems to be an *Elixir Vitæ*.

How quaint is the case of the fish called kurtus, which lives in fresh waters in New Guinea. There are not many eggs, and the dangers are great, yet safety is secured. Round each egg is coiled a delicate filament which unwinds when the eggs are shed in the water. Quite automatically the filaments become entangled together and bind the eggs into a double bunch, like a double bunch of currants. At the breeding season a finger-like hook of bone grows upwards, forwards, and then downwards on the top of the male's skull; and just before the hook is becoming an "eye" he rushes at the floating bunch of eggs, and gets them fixed on the top of his head. No place could be safer, and he carries them about till they hatch. Of course, this is not *maternal*, but we must give the fathers a look in.

Underneath the moss on an old wall we found a small squat insect almost as white as flour. It moved very slowly, as if half asleep, and it seemed to have a "trailer"

behind its body, shaped rather like a broad shovel. When we looked into this trailer we found it was full of developing eggs. Where is the maternal voice not heard ?

DEFENCE OF THE YOUNG.

Those who live in the country know well that they must be cautious in going near a mare with a young foal. In her solicitude she is dangerous. Even a gentle creature may forget herself and kill her master whom she suspects of threatening her offspring. What really happens in an animal so long domesticated as the horse is no doubt a welling up of an ancestral instinct from the depths of the unconscious. It is very instructive to learn that some Scotch cows transported to America hid their new-born calves in the bush while they grazed in the open—returning in a bound, as it were, to the custom of wild cattle.

We read of the rage of the she-bear " robbed of her whelps," but there is likewise rage when the young are merely threatened. Many carnivores show this, not only lions and leopards, but small creatures like stoats and weasels. In defence of its family the mother stoat will stand up to a man : there is not a particle of fear in its composition. We hardly wonder at the passion of the mother elephant with her offspring at her feet, but we can cap that near home when the mother-hare leaps over the weasel intruding on the leverets playing in the light of the moon and kills him with a strong back-kick. There are many instances of the *mater furiosa*.

The same is true of many birds. How vigorously the swans defend their nest, and how effectively the cliff-swallows unite to drive off the falcon ! At lower levels, too, we see the same parental courage, as in the father - stickleback, who rushes at intruders five times his own size ; or in the mother-spider, who will fight for her cocoon. On a side-track are the devices illustrated by lapwing and by fox, where there is a feigning of lameness or injury, which distracts attention from the young.

Lapwings—one of them by feigning lameness—trying to draw a fox away from their nesting-place.

DIFFICULT CASES.

There are cases where maternai care seems conspicuous by its absence. What is one to make of them ? There is no special difficulty with the " spawners." The frog deposits her thousand or more eggs in the shallow water of the pond, and cares no more about them. There are too many tadpoles to be looked after, and the race continues in spite of the huge infantile mortality. Nature does not support the superfluous—even when it is a virtue. But the way of the frog would not work in the case of the golden eagle with its two eggs, or of the bat with its single offspring.

Then there are cases where man makes a puzzle by failing to recognize the intellectual limitations of the animal. Many a female fish will devour her own offspring if she comes across them in the water ; but it is not to be supposed that she is in any sense aware that they are hers ! We may set against this more than one case where the male shelters the eggs in his mouth ! He fasts till they are hatched ; but it looks like " tempting Providence."

In other instances, like that of Professor Whitman's passenger pigeon, which could not, or would not, retrieve her eggs though they were only a few inches off, the explanation is simply this : that in many animals certain parts of the business of life have in the course of time been " handed over to instinct " so completely, and, in natural conditions, so effectively, that any disturbance of the routine nonplusses the animal altogether.

We recall one of Mr. Hamerton's true stories about a cow that was so grief-stricken by the death of her calf that she would not eat her food or give any milk. So they took the skin of the calf and stuffed it with hay and placed it before the bereaved mother. She was comforted, and licked the stuffed calf copiously ; her appetite returned and her milk-giving. But as time went on she made a hole in the calf's skin with her caresses, and coming on the hay-stuffing ate it. Now it is fallacious to find any great difficulty in this absurd story, or in others like it. It would be erroneous to argue that the cow had no affection for her offspring because she was comforted by its stuffed skin ; it would be equally erroneous to reproach the cow for its ignorance of bovine anatomy.

At the same time we may admit that the brain of the domesticated cow is in a rather comatose condition.

There are many interesting cases where the instinct for mothering is so strong that it overflows to the children of quite different animals. Miss Frances Pitt took a new-born rat and, after putting it beside young kittens for a little to get the appropriate odour, gave it to a nursing cat. It was accepted without demur and duly suckled, licked, and nurtured as if it had been a kitten. When the rat became able to fend for itself it kept up its friendship for the foster-mother and used to pay her frequent visits. They continued to be on the best of terms. One day the rat came running impetuously into the room where another cat was lying, whose surprise was a spectacle! An interesting detail was that, though the foster-mother had been a good "ratter," she never killed another. One would like to know whether this fact could be generalized—whether a foster-mother in her subsequent life ever attacks the species of its *adopted* baby.

The otter is a paragon of maternal care—she punishes her cubs, but she also plays with them.

An extraordinary case of "fostering" is that of a hen who sheltered two young weasels (which were extraneously fed by the observer), and got on very well with them except when they bit her in searching for something to suck. The mothering instinct is strong!

Almost unique among backboned animals is the case of the cuckoo, which shirks most of its maternal responsibilities, but this is a special freak—a telescoping of two whole chapters in the ordinary routine of instinctive parental behaviour. Among insects there are many approximations to this extraordinarily interesting deviation from the strait path of maternity.

MATERNAL INSTRUCTION.

Naturalists have given far too little attention to the education of young animals by their parents—usually by their mothers. It is not common, but it is probably of great importance when it occurs. For it corresponds to tradition and education in mankind—a way of entailing gains that do not form part of the organic or flesh-and-blood inheritance. Naturally enough we do not find examples of maternal instruction among those animals whose behaviour is almost wholly instinctive or hereditarily enregistered. Thus a young Sphex wasp is not in any way handicapped in the business of its life by being an orphan (its parents are always dead before it is hatched), for it has all its repertory of devices ready-made and inborn.

It is among mammals in particular, where intelligence is waxing and instincts are waning, that maternal instruction is highly developed. Take the otter, for instance, which we know so well through the lifelong studies of Mr. Tregarthen. The mother is a paragon of maternal care and a good educationist. She punishes her cubs, but she also plays with them. She teaches them the long alphabet of woodcraft—which sounds are trivial and which significant; when to press on and when to play possum. She gives them swimming lessons and diving lessons, and shows them how to catch trout and eel, frog and rabbit. She teaches them not to return to the kill, how to go home without retracing their steps, how to lie *perdu* beneath the bank of the river while the otter hounds are nosing all over the place. Table manners have also to be taught, and they have a biological basis; thus frogs must be skinned before they are eaten, for the skin is as unpalatable as the muscle is delicious, and while the trout must be eaten from the head, the eel must be tackled from the tail! There is a long childhood and an elaborate schooling, and surely we have here one of the reasons for the otter's survival. The same kind of maternal instruction is given by stoat and by fox, and by various other mammals; likewise by some birds. It must also be remembered that the play of young animals is to some extent under the mother's eye, and that playing means an irresponsible apprenticeship to the serious business of life, a time for testing instincts and liberating intelligence.

THE BIOLOGY OF MOTHERING.

The biological philosophy of the whole matter is not far to seek. The clash of life against environing difficulties and limitations brings about the struggle for existence. One way of coping with certain difficulties is to multiply so prodigiously that some members of the species are almost bound to win through. This is the spawning solution. One of our British starfishes, Luidia by name, has in a year two hundred millions of eggs, so that it

operates with a big margin. Many worms and insects, fishes and frogs, illustrate this success of the prolific. But it is not given to every animal constitution to multiply so prodigiously, and other ways must be tried. Thus success in the course of ages has rewarded those animals that evolved in the direction of maternal care. Whether this maternal care is instinctive or intelligent, or both, or neither, does not matter at present; the point is that maternal care *pays*.

It not only secures survival, but *better* survival. Thanks to the parental care the young ones get a good send-off on the adventurous voyage of life. Moreover, it is physiologically expensive and preoccupying to the mother to have a million eggs in a year; there is more chance of freedom and fullness of life when there are only a few. Thus we see that animals which have got beyond the spawning solution have a finer life. And if the critic reminds us of hens laying two hundred eggs in the year, we must remind him that this is quite "unnatural," for the laying period in wild birds is very strictly punctuated. Or if we are reminded of the mammalian mother's burden while the young are still unborn, we can only answer that she is normally the better for it. Maternal care pays, and the premier place in the animal kingdom has been won by mammals, which have developed it to the highest pitch. The very name "mammal" strikes the note of mother. Surely they have their reward.

But there is more. If a fish has a million eggs many of which become larval fishes, parental care is unnecessary, and it is obviously impossible. But fishes that have only a few eggs, like sticklebacks for instance, must exhibit parental care, else they would have been long since wiped out. Now, it is plain that fishes like sticklebacks and sea-horses are more interesting creatures than cod and herring. In higher reaches, notably among birds and mammals, it is clear that when the offspring are cared for, and when they are not too numerous to be known and loved, the result is not only success to the new generation, but an enrichment of the life of the old.

We have said too little in regard to the emotional aspect, but it is difficult to get at the inner spirit of the animal. Take this paragraph from Darwin: "Rengger observed an American monkey (a Cebus) carefully driving off the flies which plagued her infant; and Duvancel saw a gibbon (Hylobates) washing the faces of her young ones in a stream. So intense is the grief of female monkeys for the loss of their young that it invariably caused the death of certain kinds kept under confinement by Brehm, in North Africa. Orphan monkeys were always adopted and carefully guarded by other monkeys, both male and female." We have seen a monkey mothering a white rat, even when itself afraid.

A VIRTUOUS CIRCLE.

Here is what we may call not a vicious, but a *virtuous circle*. Prolonged infancy and childhood affords opportunity for perfecting powers before mistakes are too costly, and for making original experiments or testing new inborn promptings. But this prolongation of youth is only possible if there be strongly developed and enduring maternal (or parental) care. On the other hand, it is the prolonged association of the offspring with the parents that tightens the cords of love—that raises devoted care into affection. Evolution works in circles.

Looking backwards, what do we see? The carrying of eggs before they are laid is extended to carrying them afterwards. The care of the eggs is extended to the care of what comes out of them. Remaining about the egg cluster would naturally lead on to brooding, and this would lead to nests in which the mother may have some comfort and concealment. On a side-track are all the preparations that are made by insects for young which they do not survive to see. A fresh start is made when there is viviparity, when the mother brings forth a young one like a miniature of herself, a young that has been for a longer or shorter time her partner, and flesh of her flesh. There is a gradual intensifying of care and protection, a forging of emotional bonds, a definite educational discipline, and sometimes a short period of co-operation. Finally, on the foundations of the family there rises the animal society.

Monkey with six-days-old baby.
Photo. Bond.

The PURITY OF THE TURF

by P. G. WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY A. WALLIS MILLS

WHEN the thing was over, I made my mind up.

"Jeeves," I said.

"Sir?"

"Never again! The strain is too great. I don't say I shall chuck betting altogether: if I get hold of a good thing for one of the big races no doubt I shall have my bit on as aforetime: but you won't catch me mixing myself up with one of these minor country meetings again. They're too hot."

"I think perhaps you are right, sir," said Jeeves.

It was young Bingo Little who lured me into the thing. About the third week of my visit at Twing Hall he blew into my bedroom one morning while I was toying with a bit of breakfast and thinking of this and that.

"Bertie!" he said, in an earnest kind of voice.

I decided to take a firm line from the start. Young Bingo, if you remember, was at a pretty low ebb at about this juncture. He had not only failed to put his finances on a sound basis over the recent Sermon Handicap, but had also discovered that Cynthia Wick loved another. These things had jarred the unfortunate mutt, and he had developed a habit of dropping in on me at all hours and decanting his anguished soul on me. I could stand this all right after dinner, and even after lunch; but before breakfast, no. We Woosters are amiability itself, but there is a limit.

"Now look here, old friend," I said. "I know your bally heart is broken and all that, and at some future time I shall be delighted to hear all about it, but——"

"I didn't come to talk about that."

"No? Good egg!"

"The past," said young Bingo, "is dead. Let us say no more about it."

"Right-o!"

"I have been wounded to the very depths of my soul, but don't speak about it."

"I won't."

"Ignore it. Forget it."

"Absolutely!"

I hadn't seen him so dashed reasonable for weeks.

"What I came to see you about this morning, Bertie," he said, fishing a sheet of paper out of his pocket, "was to ask if you would care to come in on another little flutter."

If there is one thing we Woosters are simply dripping with, it is sporting blood. I bolted the rest of my sausage, and sat up and took notice.

"Proceed," I said. "You interest me strangely, old bird."

Bingo laid the paper on the bed.

"On Monday week," he said, "you may or may not know, the annual village school-treat takes place. Lord Wickhammersley lends the Hall grounds for the purpose. There will be games, and a conjurer, and coco-nut shies, and tea in a tent. And also sports."

"I know. Cynthia was telling me."

Young Bingo winced.

"Would you mind not mentioning that name? I am not made of marble."

"Sorry!"

"Well, as I was saying, this jamboree is slated for Monday week. The question is, Are we on?"

"How do you mean, 'Are we on'?"

"I am referring to the sports. Steggles did so well out of the Sermon Handicap that he has decided to make a book on these sports. Punters can be accommodated at ante-post odds or starting price, according to their preference."

Steggles, I don't know if you remember, was one of the gang of youths who were reading for some examination or other with

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old Heppenstall down at the Vicarage. He was the fellow who had promoted the Sermon Handicap. A bird of considerable enterprise and vast riches, being the only son of one of the biggest bookies in London, but no pal of mine. I never liked the chap. He was a ferret-faced egg with a shifty eye and not a few pimples. On the whole, a nasty growth.

"I think we ought to look into it," said young Bingo.

I pressed the bell.

"I'll consult Jeeves. I don't touch any sporting proposition without his advice. Jeeves," I said, as he drifted in, "rally round."

"Sir?"

"Stand by. We want your advice."

"Very good, sir."

"State your case, Bingo."

Bingo stated his case.

"What about it, Jeeves?" I said. "Do we go in?"

Jeeves pondered to some extent.

"I am inclined to favour the idea, sir."

That was good enough for me. "Right," I said. "Then we will form a syndicate and bust the Ring. I supply the money, you supply the brains, and Bingo—what do you supply, Bingo?"

"If you will carry me, and let me settle up later," said young Bingo, "I think I can put you in the way of winning a parcel on the Mothers' Sack Race."

"All right. We will put you down as Inside Information. Now, what are the events?"

BINGO reached for his paper and consulted it.

"Girls' Under Fourteen Fifty-Yard Dash seems to open the proceedings."

"Anything to say about that, Jeeves?"

"No, sir. I have no information."

"What's the next?"

"Boys' and Girls' Mixed Animal Potato Race, All Ages."

This was a new one to me. I had never heard of it at any of the big meetings.

"What's that?"

"Rather sporting," said young Bingo. "The competitors enter in couples, each couple being assigned an animal cry and a potato. For instance, let's suppose that you and Jeeves entered. Jeeves would stand at a fixed point holding a potato. You would have your head in a sack, and you would grope about trying to find Jeeves and making a noise like a cat; Jeeves also making a noise like a cat. Other competitors would be making noises like cows and pigs and dogs, and so on, and groping about for *their* potato-holders, who would also be making noises like cows and pigs and dogs and so on——"

I stopped the poor fish.

"Jolly if you're fond of animals," I said, "but on the whole——"

"Precisely, sir," said Jeeves. "I wouldn't touch it."

"Too open, what?"

"Exactly, sir. Very hard to estimate form."

"Carry on, Bingo. Where do we go from there?"

"Mothers' Sack Race."

"Ah! that's better. This is where you know something."

"A gift for Mrs. Penworthy, the tobacconist's wife," said Bingo, confidently. "I was in at her shop yesterday, buying cigarettes, and she told me she had won three times at fairs in Worcestershire. She only moved to these parts a short time ago, so nobody knows about her. She promised me she would keep herself dark, and I think we could get a good price."

"Risk a tenner each way, Jeeves, what?"

"I think so, sir."

"Girls' Open Egg and Spoon Race," read Bingo.

"How about that?"

"I doubt if it would be worth while to invest, sir," said Jeeves. "I am told it is a certainty for last year's winner, Sarah Mills, who will doubtless start an odds-on favourite."

"Good, is she?"

"They tell me in the village that she carries a beautiful egg, sir."

"Then there's the Obstacle Race," said Bingo. "Risky, in my opinion. Like betting on the Grand National. Fathers' Hat-Trimming Contest—another speculative event. That's all, except the Choir Boys' Hundred Yards Handicap, for a pewter mug presented by the vicar—open to all whose voices have not broken before the second Sunday in Epiphany. Willie Chambers won last year, in a canter, receiving fifteen yards. This time he will probably be handicapped out of the race. I don't know what to advise."

"If I might make a suggestion, sir."

I eyed Jeeves with interest. I don't know that I'd ever seen him look so nearly excited.

"You've got something up your sleeve?"

"I have, sir."

"Red-hot?"

"That precisely describes it, sir. I think I may confidently assert that we have the winner of the Choir Boys' Handicap under this very roof, sir. Harold, the page-boy."

"Page-boy? Do you mean the tubby little chap in buttons one sees bobbing about here and there? Why, dash it, Jeeves, nobody has a greater respect for your knowledge of form than I have, but I'm hanged

if I can see Harold catching the judge's eye. He's practically circular, and every time I've seen him he's been leaning up against something half-asleep."

"He receives thirty yards, sir, and could win from scratch. The boy is a flier."

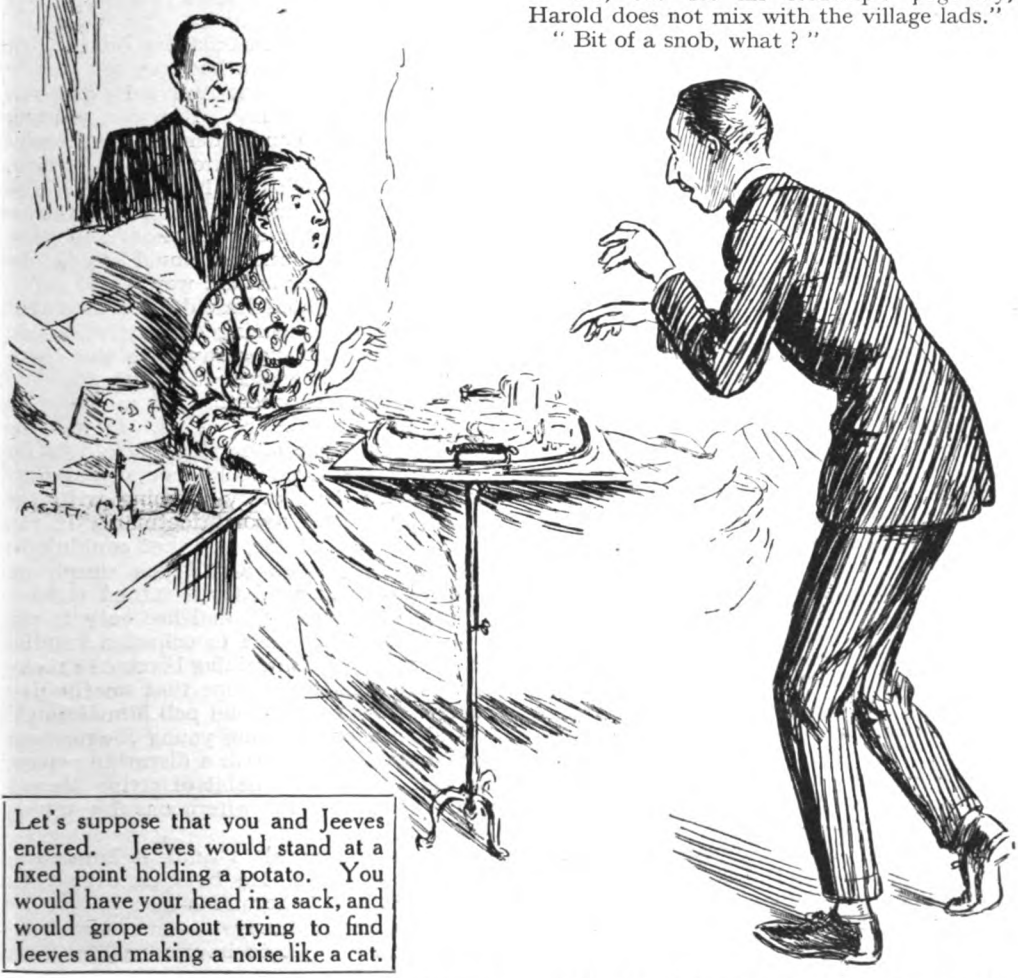
"How do you know?"

"I have forgotten, sir," said Jeeves, with a touch of austerity. "But it was opprobrious. I endeavoured to correct him, but he outdistanced me by yards and made good his escape."

"But, I say, Jeeves, this is sensational. And yet—if he's such a sprinter, why hasn't anybody in the village found it out? Surely he plays with the other boys?"

"No, sir. As his lordship's page-boy, Harold does not mix with the village lads."

"Bit of a snob, what?"



Let's suppose that you and Jeeves entered. Jeeves would stand at a fixed point holding a potato. You would have your head in a sack, and would grope about trying to find Jeeves and making a noise like a cat.

Jeeves coughed, and there was a dreamy look in his eye.

"I was as much astonished as yourself, sir, when I first became aware of the lad's capabilities. I happened to pursue him one morning with the intention of fetching him a clip on the side of the head——"

"Great Scott, Jeeves! You!"

"Yes, sir. The boy is of an outspoken disposition, and had made an opprobrious remark respecting my personal appearance."

"What did he say about your appearance?"

"He is somewhat acutely alive to the existence of class distinctions, sir."

"You're absolutely certain he's such a wonder?" said Bingo. "I mean, it wouldn't do to plunge unless you're sure."

"If you desire to ascertain the boy's form by personal inspection, sir, it will be a simple matter to arrange a secret trial."

"I'm bound to say I should feel easier in my mind," I said.

"Then if I may take a shilling from the money on your dressing-table——"

"What for?"

"I propose to bribe the lad to speak slightingly of the second footman's squint, sir. Charles is somewhat sensitive on the point, and should undoubtedly make the lad extend himself. If you will be at the first-floor passage-window, overlooking the back-door, in half an hour's time——"

I don't know when I've dressed in such a hurry. As a rule, I'm what you might call a slow and careful dresser: I like to linger over the tie and see that the trousers are just so; but this morning I was all worked up. I just shoved on my things anyhow, and joined Bingo at the window with a quarter of an hour to spare.

The passage-window looked down on to a broad sort of paved courtyard, which ended after about twenty yards in an archway through a high wall. Beyond this archway you got on to a strip of the drive, which curved round for another thirty yards or so till it was lost behind a thick shrubbery. I put myself in the stripling's place and thought what steps I would take with a second footman after me. There was only one thing to do—leg it for the shrubbery and take cover; which meant that at least fifty yards would have to be covered—an excellent test. If good old Harold could fight off the second footman's challenge long enough to allow him to reach the bushes, there wasn't a choir-boy in England who could give him thirty yards in the hundred. I waited, all of a twitter, for what seemed hours, and then suddenly there was a confused noise without and something round and blue and buttony shot through the back-door and buzzed for the archway like a mustang. And about two seconds later out came the second footman, going his hardest.

There was nothing to it. Absolutely nothing. The field never had a chance. Long before the footman reached the half-way mark, Harold was in the bushes, throwing stones. I came away from the window thrilled to the marrow; and when I met Jeeves on the stairs I was so moved that I nearly grasped his hand.

"Jeeves," I said, "no discussion! The Wooster shirt goes on this boy!"

"Very good, sir," said Jeeves.

THE worst of these country meetings is that you can't plunge as heavily as you would like when you get a good thing, because it alarms the Ring. Steggles, though pimpled, was, as I have indicated, no chump, and if I had invested all I wanted to he would have put two and two together. I managed to get a good solid bet down for the syndicate, however, though it did make him look thoughtful. I heard in the next few days that he had been making searching inquiries in the village concerning Harold; but nobody could tell him anything, and eventually he came to the conclusion, I suppose, that I must be having a long shot on the strength of that thirty-yards start. Public opinion wavered between Jimmy Goode, receiving ten yards, at seven-to-two, and Alexander Bartlett, with six yards start, at eleven-to-four. Willie Chambers, scratch, was offered to the public at two-to-one, but found no takers.

We were taking no chances on the big event, and directly we had got our money on at a nice hundred-to-twelve Harold was put into strict training. It was a wearing business, and I can understand now why most of the big trainers are grim, silent men, who look as though they had suffered. The kid wanted constant watching. It was no good talking to him about honour and glory and how proud his mother would be when he wrote and told her he had won a real cup—the moment blighted Harold discovered that training meant knocking off pastry, taking exercise, and keeping away from the cigarettes, he was all against it, and it was only by unceasing vigilance that we managed to keep him in any shape at all. It was the diet that was the stumbling-block. As far as exercise went, we could generally arrange for a sharp dash every morning with the assistance of the second footman. It ran into money, of course, but that couldn't be helped. Still, when a kid has simply to wait till the butler's back is turned to have the run of the pantry and has only to nip into the smoking-room to collect a handful of the best Turkish, training becomes a rocky job. We could only hope that on the day his natural stamina would pull him through.

And then one evening young Bingo came back from the links with a disturbing story. He had been in the habit of giving Harold mild exercise in the afternoons by taking him out as a caddie.

At first he seemed to think it humorous, the poor chump! He bubbled over with merry mirth as he began his tale.

"I say, rather funny this afternoon," he said. "You ought to have seen Steggles's face!"

"Seen Steggles's face? What for?"

"When he saw young Harold sprint, I mean."

I was filled with a grim foreboding of an awful doom.

"Good heavens! You didn't let Harold sprint in front of Steggles?"

Young Bingo's jaw dropped.

"I never thought of that," he said, gloomily. "It wasn't my fault. I was playing a round with Steggles, and after we'd finished we went into the club-house for a drink, leaving Harold with the clubs

Something round and blue and buttony shot through the back-door and buzzed for the archway like a mustang.

outside. In about five minutes we came out, and there was the kid on the gravel practising swings with Steggles's driver and a stone. When he saw us coming, the kid dropped the club and was over the horizon like a streak. Steggles was absolutely dumbfounded. And I must say it was revelation even to me. The kid certainly gave of his best. Of course,

it's a nuisance in a way ; but I don't see, on second thoughts," said Bingo, brightening up, " what it matters. We're on at a good price. We've nothing to lose by the kid's form becoming known. I take it he will start odds on, but that doesn't affect us."

I looked at Jeeves. Jeeves looked at me.

" It affects us all right if he doesn't start at all."

" Precisely, sir."

" What do you mean ? " asked Bingo.

" If you ask me," I said, " I think Steggles will try to nobble him before the race."

" Good Lord ! I never thought of that." Bingo blenched. " You don't think he would really do it ? "

" I think he would have a jolly good try. Steggles is a bad man. From now on, Jeeves, we must watch Harold like hawks."

" Undoubtedly, sir."

" Ceaseless vigilance, what ? "

" Precisely, sir."

" You wouldn't care to sleep in his room, Jeeves ? "

" No, sir, I should not."

" No, nor would I, if it comes to that. But dash it all," I said, " we're letting ourselves get rattled ! We're losing our nerve. This won't do. How can Steggles possibly get at Harold, even if he wants to ? "

There was no cheering young Bingo up. He's one of those birds who simply leap at the morbid view, if you give them half a chance.

" There are all sorts of ways of nobbling favourites," he said, in a sort of death-bed voice. " You ought to read some of these racing novels. In ' Pipped on the Post,' Lord Jasper Mauleverer as near as a toucher outed Bonny Betsy by bribing the head-lad to slip a cobra into her stable the night before the Derby ! "

" What are the chances of a cobra biting Harold, Jeeves ? "

" Slight, I should imagine, sir. And in such an event, knowing the boy as intimately as I do, my anxiety would be entirely for the snake."

" Still, unceasing vigilance, Jeeves."

" Most certainly, sir."

I MUST say I got a bit fed with young Bingo in the next few days. It's all very well for a fellow with a big winner in his stable to exercise proper care, but in my opinion Bingo overdid it. The blighter's mind appeared to be absolutely saturated with racing fiction ; and in stories of that kind, as far as I could make out, no horse is ever allowed to start in a race without at least a dozen attempts to put it out of action. He stuck to Harold like a plaster. Never let the unfortunate kid out of his sight. Of course, it meant a lot to the poor old egg if he could collect on this race, because it would give him enough money to chuck his tutoring job and get back to London ; but all the same, he needn't have woken me up at three in the morning twice running—once to tell me we ought to cook Harold's food ourselves to prevent doping : the other time to say that he had heard mysterious noises in the shrubbery. But he reached the limit, in my opinion, when he insisted on my going to evening service on Sunday, the day before the sports.

" Why on earth ? " I said, never being much of a lad for evensong.

" Well, I can't go myself. I sha'n't be here. I've got to go to London to-day with young Egbert." Egbert was Lord Wickhammersley's son, the one Bingo was tutoring. " He's going for a visit down in Kent, and I've got to see him off at Charing Cross. It's an infernal nuisance. I sha'n't be back till Monday afternoon. In fact, I shall miss most of the sports, I expect. Everything, therefore, depends on you, Bertie."

" But why should either of us go to evening service ? "

" Ass ! Harold sings in the choir, doesn't he ? "

" What about it ? I can't stop him dislocating his neck over a high note, if that's what you're afraid of."

" Fool ! Steggles sings in the choir, too. There may be dirty work after the service."

" What absolute rot ! "

" Is it ? " said young Bingo. " Well, let me tell you that in ' Jenny, the Girl Jockey,' the villain kidnapped the boy who was to ride the favourite the night before the big race, and he was the only one who understood and could control the horse, and if the heroine hadn't dressed up in riding things and——"

" Oh, all right, all right. But, if there's any danger, it seems to me the simplest thing would be for Harold not to turn out on Sunday evening."

" He must turn out. You seem to think the infernal kid is a monument of rectitude, beloved by all. He's got the shakiest reputation of any kid in the village. His name is as near being mud as it can jolly well stick. He's played hookey from the choir so often that the vicar told him, if one more thing happened, he would fire him out. Nice chumps we should look if he was scratched the night before the race ! "

Well, of course, that being so, there was nothing for it but to toddle along.

There's something about evening service in a country church that makes a fellow feel drowsy and peaceful. Sort of end-of-a-perfect-day feeling. Old Heppenstall, the vicar, was up in the pulpit, and he has a kind

of regular, bleating delivery that assists thought. They had left the door open, and the air was full of a mixed scent of trees and honeysuckle and mildew and villagers' Sunday clothes. As far as the eye could reach, you could see farmers propped up in restful attitudes, breathing heavily; and the children in the congregation who had fidgeted during the earlier part of the proceedings were now lying back in a surfeited sort of coma. The last rays of the setting sun shone through the stained-glass windows, birds were twittering in the trees, the women's dresses crackled gently in the stillness. Peaceful. That's what I'm driving at. I felt peaceful. Everybody felt peaceful. And that is why the explosion, when it came, sounded like the end of all things.

I call it an explosion, because that was what it seemed like when it broke loose. One moment a dreamy hush was all over the place, broken only by old Heppenstall talking about our duty to our neighbours; and then, suddenly, a sort of piercing, shrieking squeal that got you right between the eyes and ran all the way down your spine and out at the soles of the feet.

"EE-ee-ee-ee-ee! Oo-ee! Ee-ee-ee-ee!"

It sounded like about six hundred pigs having their tails twisted simultaneously, but it was simply the kid Harold, who appeared to be having some species of fit. He was jumping up and down and slapping at the back of his neck. And about every other second he would take a deep breath and give out another of the squeals.

Well, I mean, you can't do that sort of thing in the middle of the sermon during evening service without exciting remark. The congregation came out of its trance with a jerk, and climbed on the pews to get a better view. Old Heppenstall stopped in the middle of a sentence and spun round. And a couple of vergers with great presence of mind bounded up the aisle like leopards, collected Harold, still squealing, and marched him out. They disappeared into the vestry, and I grabbed my hat and legged it round to the stage-door, full of apprehension and what not. I couldn't think what the deuce could have happened, but somewhere dimly behind the proceedings there seemed to me to lurk the hand of the blighter Steggles.

BY the time I got there and managed to get someone to open the door, which was locked, the service seemed to be over. Old Heppenstall was standing in the middle of a crowd of choir-boys and vergers and sextons and what not, putting the wretched Harold through it with no little vim. I had come in at the tail-end of what must have been a fairly fruity oration.

"Wretched boy! How dare you——"

"I got a sensitive skin!"

"This is no time to talk about your skin——"

"Somebody put a beetle down my back!"

"Absurd!"

"I felt it wriggling——"

"Nonsense!"

"Sounds pretty thin, doesn't it?" said someone at my side.

It was Steggles, dash him. Clad in a snowy surplice or cassock, or whatever they call it, and wearing an expression of grave concern, the blighter had the cold, cynical crust to look me in the eyeball without a blink.

"Did you put a beetle down his neck?" I cried.

"Me!" said Steggles. "Me!"

Old Heppenstall was putting on the black cap.

"I do not credit a word of your story, wretched boy! I have warned you before, and now the time has come to act. You cease from this moment to be a member of my choir. Go, miserable child!"

Steggles plucked at my sleeve.

"In that case," he said, "those bets, you know—I'm afraid you lose your money, dear old boy. It's a pity you didn't put it on S.P. I always think S.P.'s the only safe way."

I gave him one look. Not a bit of good, of course.

"And they talk about the Purity of the Turf!" I said. And I meant it to sting, by Jove!

JEEVES received the news bravely, but I think the man was a bit rattled beneath the surface.

"An ingenious young gentleman, Mr. Steggles, sir."

"A bally swindler, you mean"

"Perhaps that would be a more exact description. However, these things will happen on the Turf, and it is useless to complain."

"I wish I had your sunny disposition, Jeeves!"

Jeeves bowed.

"We now rely, then, it would seem, sir, almost entirely on Mrs. Penworthy. Should she justify Mr. Little's encomiums and show real class in the Mothers' Sack Race, our gains will just balance our losses."

"Yes; but that's not much consolation when you've been looking forward to a big win."

"It is just possible that we may still find ourselves on the right side of the ledger after all, sir. Before Mr. Little left, I persuaded him to invest a small sum for the syndicate of which you were kind enough to make me a member, sir, on the Girls' Egg and Spoon Race."

" On Sarah Mills ? "

" No, sir. On a long-priced outsider. Little Prudence Baxter, sir, the child of his lordship's head gardener. Her father assures me she has a very steady hand. She is accustomed to bring him his mug of beer from the cottage each afternoon, and he informs me she has never spilled a drop."

Well, that sounded as though young Prudence's control was good. But how about speed ? With seasoned performers like Sarah Mills entered, the thing practically amounted to a classic race, and in these big events you must have speed.

" I am aware that it is what is termed a long shot, sir. Still, I thought it judicious."

" You backed her for a place, too, of course ? "

" Yes, sir. Each way."

" Well, I suppose it's all right. I've never known you make a bloomer yet."

" Thank you very much, sir."

I'M bound to say that, as a general rule, my idea of a large afternoon would be to keep as far away from a village school-treat as possible. A sticky business. But with such grave issues toward, if you know what I mean, I sank my prejudices on this occasion and rolled up. I found the proceedings about as scaly as I had expected. It was a warm day, and the Hall grounds were a dense, practically liquid mass of peasantry. Kids seethed to and fro. One of them, a small girl of sorts, grabbed my hand and hung on to it as I clove my way through the jam to where the Mothers' Sack Race was to finish. We hadn't been introduced, but she seemed to think I would do as well as anyone else to talk to about the rag-doll she had won in the Lucky Dip, and she rather spread herself on the topic.

" I'm going to call it Gertrude," she said. " And I shall undress it every night and put it to bed, and wake it up in the morning and dress it, and put it to bed at night, and wake it up next morning and dress it——"

" I say, old thing," I said, " I don't want to hurry you and all that, but you couldn't condense it a bit, could you ? I'm rather anxious to see the finish of this race. The Wooster fortunes are by way of hanging on it."

" I'm going to run in a race soon," she said, shelving the doll for the nonce and descending to ordinary chit-chat.

" Yes ? " I said. Distrait, if you know what I mean, and trying to peer through the chinks in the crowd. " What race is that ? "

" Egg 'n Spoon."

" No, really ? Are you Sarah Mills ? "

" Na-ow ! " Registering scorn. " I'm Prudence Baxter."

Naturally this put our relations on a different footing. I gazed at her with considerable interest. One of the stable. I must say she didn't look much of a flier. She was short and round. Bit out of condition, I thought.

" I say," I said, " that being so, you mustn't dash about in the hot sun and take the edge off yourself. You must conserve your energies, old friend. Sit down here in the shade."

" Don't want to sit down."

" Well, take it easy, anyhow."

The kid flitted to another topic like a butterfly hovering from flower to flower.

" I'm a good girl," she said.

" I bet you are. I hope you're a good egg-and-spoon racer, too."

" Harold's a bad boy. Harold squealed in church and isn't allowed to come to the treat. I'm glad," continued this ornament of her sex, wrinkling her nose virtuously, " because he's a bad boy. He pulled my hair Friday. Harold isn't coming to the treat ! Harold isn't coming to the treat ! Harold isn't coming to the treat ! " she chanted, making a regular song of it.

" Don't rub it in, my dear old gardener's daughter," I pleaded. " You don't know it, but you've hit on rather a painful subject."

" Ah, Wooster, my dear fellow ! So you have made friends with this little lady ? "

It was old Heppenstall, beaming pretty profusely. Life and soul of the party.

" I am delighted, my dear Wooster," he went on, " quite delighted at the way you young men are throwing yourselves into the spirit of this little festivity of ours."

" Oh, yes ? " I said.

" Oh, yes ! Even Rupert Steggles. I must confess that my opinion of Rupert Steggles has materially altered for the better this afternoon."

Mine hadn't. But I didn't say so.

" I had always considered Rupert Steggles, between ourselves, a rather self-centred youth, by no means the kind who would put himself out to further the enjoyment of his fellows. And yet twice within the last half-hour I have observed him escorting Mrs. Penworthy, our worthy tobacconist's wife, to the refreshment-tent."

I left him standing. I shook off the clutching hand of the Baxter kid and hared it rapidly to the spot where the Mothers' Sack Race was just finishing. I had a horrid presentiment that there had been more dirty work at the cross-roads. The first person I ran into was young Bingo. I grabbed him by the arm.

" Who won ? "

" I don't know. I didn't notice." There was bitterness in the chappie's voice. " It

wasn't Mrs. Penworthy, dash her ! Bertie, that hound Steggles is nothing more nor less than one of our leading snakes. I don't know how he heard about her, but he must have got on to it that she was dangerous. Do you know what he did ? He lured that miserable woman into the refreshment-tent five minutes before the race, and brought her out so weighed down with cake and tea that she blew up in the first twenty yards. Just rolled over and lay there ! Well, thank goodness we still have Harold ! "

I gaped at the poor chump.

" Harold ! Haven't you heard ? "

" Heard ? " Bingo turned a delicate green. " Heard what ? I haven't heard anything. I only arrived five minutes ago. Came here straight from the station. What has happened ? Tell me ! "

I slipped him the information. He stared at me for a moment in a ghastly sort of way, then with a hollow groan tottered away and was lost in the crowd. A nasty knock, poor chap. I didn't blame him for being upset.

They were clearing the decks now for the Egg and Spoon Race, and I thought I might as well stay where I was and watch the finish. Not that I had much hope. Young Prudence was a good conversationalist, but she didn't seem to me to be the build for a winner.

Sarah Mills came past and home on a tight rein by several lengths, a popular winner.

As far as I could see through the mob, they got off to a good start. A short, red-haired child was making the running, with a freckled blonde second and Sarah Mills lying up an easy third. Our nominee was straggling along with the field, well behind the leaders. It was not hard even as early as this to spot the winner. There was a grace, a practised

precision, in the way Sarah Mills held her spoon that told its own story. She was cutting out a good pace, but her egg didn't even wobble. A natural egg-and-spooner, if ever there was one.

Class will tell. Thirty yards from the tape, the red-haired kid tripped over her feet and shot her egg on to the turf. The freckled blonde fought gamely, but she had run herself out half-way down the straight, and Sarah Mills came past and home on a tight rein by several lengths, a popular winner. The blonde was second. A sniffing female in blue gingham beat a pie-faced kid in pink for the place-money, and Prudence Baxter, Jeeves's long shot, was either fifth or sixth, I couldn't see which.

And then I was carried along with the crowd to where old Heppenstall was going to present the prizes. I found myself standing next to the man Steggles.

"Hallo, old chap!" he said, very bright and cheery. "You've had a bad day, I'm afraid."

I looked at him with silent scorn. Lost on the blighter, of course.

"It's not been a good meeting for any of the big punters," he went on. "Poor old Bingo Little went down badly over that Egg and Spoon Race."

I hadn't been meaning to chat with the fellow, but I was startled.

"How do you mean badly?" I said. "We—he only had a small bet on."

"I don't know what you call small. He had thirty quid each way on the Baxter kid."

The landscape reeled before me.

"What!"

"Thirty quid at ten to one. I thought he must have heard something, but apparently not. The race went by the form-book all right."

I was trying to do sums in my head. I was just in the middle of working out the syndicate's losses, when old Heppenstall's voice came sort of faintly to me out of the distance. He had been pretty fatherly and debonair when ladling out the prizes for the other events, but now he had suddenly grown all pained and grieved. He peered sorrowfully at the multitude.

"WITH regard to the Girls' Egg and Spoon Race, which has just concluded," he said, "I have a painful duty to perform. Circumstances have arisen which it is impossible to ignore. It is not too much to say that I am stunned."

He gave the populace about five seconds to wonder why he was stunned, then went on.

"Three years ago, as you are aware, I was compelled to expunge from the list of events at this annual festival the Fathers' Quarter-Mile, owing to reports coming to my ears of wagers taken and given on the result at the village inn and a strong suspicion that on at least one occasion the race had actually been sold by the speediest runner. That unfortunate occurrence shook my faith in human nature, I admit—but still there was one event at least which I confidently expected to remain untainted by the miasma of Professionalism. I allude to the Girls' Egg and Spoon Race. It seems, alas, that I was too sanguine."

He stopped again, and wrestled with his feelings.

"I will not weary you with the unpleasant details. I will merely say that before the race was run a stranger in our midst, the manservant of one of the guests at the Hall—I will not specify with more particularity—approached several of the competitors and presented each of them with five shillings on condition that they—er—finished. A belated sense of remorse has led him to confess to me what he did, but it is too late. The evil is accomplished, and retribution must take its course. It is no time for half-measures. I must be firm. I rule that Sarah Mills, Jane Parker, Bessie Clay, and Rosie Jukes, the first four to pass the winning-post, have forfeited their amateur status and are disqualified, and this handsome work-bag, presented by Lord Wickhammersley, goes, in consequence, to Prudence Baxter. Prudence, step forward!"

Next Month: "Bertie Changes His Mind."

THE ECCENTRIC BURGLAR

BY

JAMES BARR

ILLUSTRATED BY S. ABBEY

BLOT out one sense and the others become proportionately acute. Although Randal Wigmore's eyes were bandaged so completely as to allow of no sight, and therefore his ears must have been sharper than usual, yet he heard neither the front door nor the door of his room opened. Indeed, the first indication he received that another beside himself was in his house reached him when a man's voice demanded :—

" Can you see ? "

Wigmore turned sharply so that he faced the door. He thought that the door must be held open, for cool air struck upon his cheeks.

" What's that ? " he asked, startled.

" What am I doing ? "

A little silence, and Wigmore answered :—

" I haven't the ghost of a notion what you are doing."

" Sure ? Can you not see that I have a revolver pointed direct at your forehead ? "

Wigmore slowly shook his head.

" This is the first time I can truthfully say that I am glad that I cannot see," he asserted, rather sadly.

A little while, and he heard the door shut. Someone advanced across the room and, so thought Wigmore, stood gazing down upon him. Wigmore sat with his hands clasped in his lap, his head bent and his frame in an attitude of hopeless huddle typical of those temporarily blind. There followed a long silence, and then the stranger said :—

" I'm a burglar."

Wigmore tossed his head a little toss.

" I saw a young lady pass out of the front door. I noticed she did not lock the door after her. I observed that a light burned low in this room. There was all the appearance of a house left uncared-for for the time being. I came in."

" For all practical purposes the house is empty. I am a useless guardian," said Wigmore.

" What's up ? "

" Fever's up : in my eyes."

" I don't understand."

" The doctors call it iritis. I believe it is inflammation of the iris, the coloured centre of your eye."

" Painful ? "

" Not only painful, but muddling to the brain. I can't work ; I can simply sit and be a nuisance, a bear, a bundle of snarl and nerves to my daughter, who looks after me. So pain isn't perhaps the worst part of it, although I've had pleasanter sensations round about the region of my forehead."

" Was that your daughter I saw go out ten minutes ago ? "

" There's been no one else in the house."

" She kept her young man waiting quite a long time. He paced to and fro rather impatiently, I thought. I watched him for twenty minutes or more."

Randal Wigmore sat up. His frame, hitherto so limp, went taut, stiff. He thrust his head forward as though he were trying through the bandages that blinded him to peer into the very brain of the burglar.

" Young man ! " he exclaimed, sharply.

" Have I put my foot in it ? " asked the burglar, concerned. " Come to think of it, there was no young man."

" You are not speaking the truth. Tell me what you saw."

" I don't want to make a greater mess of matters than I have already done," said the burglar, annoyed with himself.

" The way to make a greater mess is to tell me nothing further. You have alarmed me. I am thoroughly alarmed."

" Then I am downright sorry. Did you not know ? "

" I'd not so much as thought of a young man in connection with my daughter. She has never mentioned any man to me. I cannot believe disloyalty in her. But tell me what you saw."

" A young man in good position, I should guess. Of course, I did not particularly note him, but the general impression received was that of a well-educated, well-to-do, amiable and mannerly young man, thirty years old perhaps, not more. He had been strolling along, and when your daughter came out of this house he went quickly to meet her, raising his hat and smiling. She, too, met him smilingly. He passed her a packet of sorts, chocolates I fancy, and she seemed intensely grateful, for she placed her hand on his arm and pressed the packet to her bosom. To out with it now that I have gone so far, I believe they were on the point of kissing, when they remembered the spectators."

WIGMORE arose and began to pace the floor. Diana meeting a young man! Never a hint that any young man was to a special degree interested in her had been given him, yet he could not believe that Diana was a secretive girl. Diana had gone out, presumably for fresh air. She had been waiting on her father with great love and close attention, and he had been rather selfish in wishing her always to be within call of him. His infliction depressed him, and now, as he paced the room, his thoughts were of the gloomiest. He felt helpless. He feared that if he broached the subject it might bring his daughter to active, instead of passive, revolt. But broach it he must. If she were meeting a man it must be under his roof, not out on the pavement.

" Diana, Diana, Diana ! " cried the elderly man, as he sank back into his chair in a more pathetic huddle than before. " Who has got hold of you that dares not come to your father's house, but waylays you on the streets and hurries away with you ? My youngest daughter ! I cannot believe it ! "

He stopped, and the burglar at once spoke.

" I'm glad to hear you say that, sir. As a matter of fact, I made the story up."

" Don't—tell—lies," blurted out Wigmore, savagely. " You have told me the truth. Don't aggravate the truth by trying to lie out of it. The truth is hard enough to bear

without your tacking on to it hopes that will be unrealized. Let's drop the matter. I suppose you are here to ply your profession ? "

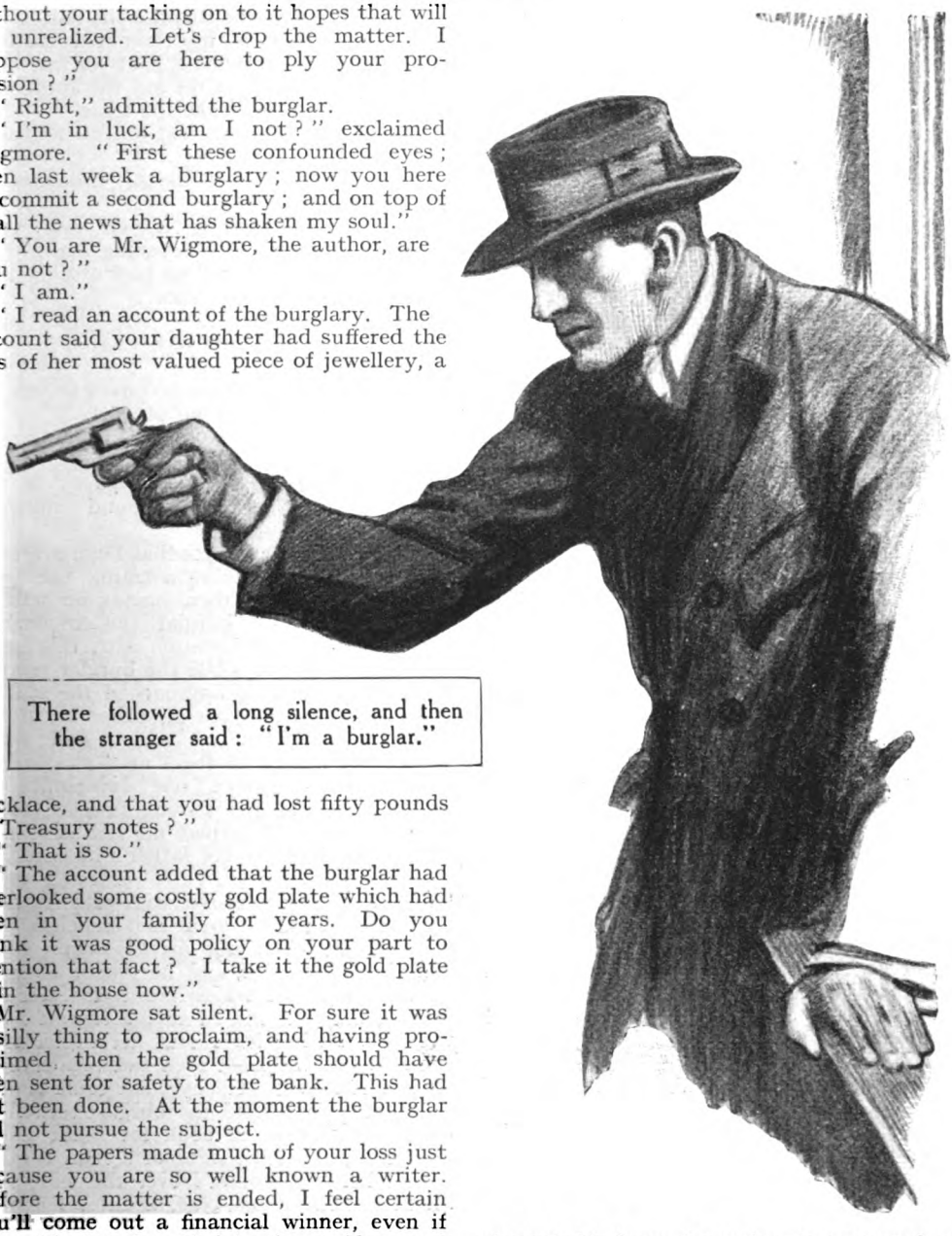
" Right," admitted the burglar.

" I'm in luck, am I not ? " exclaimed Wigmore. " First these confounded eyes ; then last week a burglary ; now you here to commit a second burglary ; and on top of it all the news that has shaken my soul."

" You are Mr. Wigmore, the author, are you not ? "

" I am."

" I read an account of the burglary. The account said your daughter had suffered the loss of her most valued piece of jewellery, a necklace, and that you had lost fifty pounds in Treasury notes ? "



There followed a long silence, and then the stranger said : " I'm a burglar."

" That is so."

" The account added that the burglar had overlooked some costly gold plate which had been in your family for years. Do you think it was good policy on your part to mention that fact ? I take it the gold plate is in the house now."

Mr. Wigmore sat silent. For sure it was a silly thing to proclaim, and having proclaimed, then the gold plate should have been sent for safety to the bank. This had not been done. At the moment the burglar did not pursue the subject.

" The papers made much of your loss just because you are so well known a writer. Before the matter is ended, I feel certain you'll come out a financial winner, even if the gold plate is added to the necklace and money. Millions must have read of the calamity that befell Randal Wigmore, author, and a fair proportion of them will be sure to buy a book by the author who suffered. Your ' Leap Over the Precipice ' is a favourite novel of mine. Before leaving home, knowing I was coming here, and might by chance see you, I slipped my copy into my pocket. Tell you what I'd like you to do for me. Autograph the book. It isn't every burglar who gets his favourite author to autograph a book."

" I fear I can't see to sign."

" All the better. Sign your name like the children's game of blindly drawing the pig. That will make your signature unique."

" Very well," said Wigmore, drawing forth his fountain-pen.

The book was placed in the author's hand, and he signed.

" Splendid ! " exclaimed the burglar. " I

doubt if you have signed better when your eyes were wide open. Now let me tell you that I have a very soft spot in my heart for you, sir. You write so sympathetically of men of my walk in life, my profession. You give the burglar a square deal. For a fact I have a good notion to leave this house empty-handed. The police have been called in ? "

" Yes."

" Have they accomplished anything ? "

" I think not."

" No clue ? "

" None, I believe "

" That's the police all over. Makes a burglar's business about the safest job one can be at. I am fond of the police. Civilians have interfered with me often and often. They wake up from sleep at the most inconvenient moment, or happen to arrive home at the very wrong minute for the industrious burglar and cause one to fly out of top-storey windows or scramble out of manholes. The police are never so inconsiderate. They sleep on. By the way, when are you expecting your daughter home ? "

" When she went out I thought she would not be long."

" Then I'd best be hopping it. I don't want a rumpus, and where there is a frightened girl there is always a rumpus. No, sir, I'll not touch that gold plate. In this autograph of yours I have got something I never dreamed of possessing. I thank you for it. I'll scribble a note to your daughter giving her a hint or two about how to leave things when she goes out with her young man so that the house will not attract burglars."

Wigmore heard the fellow scribble something, then tear out a page from a notebook and step across to the mantelpiece.

" Mr. Wigmore, let me shake your hand. I am genuinely in love with your writing. Somehow I feel that the burglary of last week will turn out a matter of pleasure and profit to you before you've heard the last of it. Shake."

The author took the burglar's hand. He said :—

" I am beholden to you for not taking the advantage you have it in your power to take. My book, ' Leap Over the Precipice,' has done me many a good turn, but none more surprising than this. I don't suppose it's right of me, but I can't help wishing you good luck."

" And I think it right to wish you all the good luck in the world," said the burglar, giving the author's hand a warm squeeze.

Before the burglar had gone two hundred yards from Wigmore's house, he came face to face with Diana. Acting on the spur of the moment, he stopped the girl.

' Miss Wigmore, I have been paying your father a visit," he said, buoyantly striving to cover his confusion.

The girl looked the surprise she felt.

" Your father is my favourite author. See, he has autographed a book for me."

The burglar showed the girl the autograph to convince her he spoke the truth.

" I'm afraid I let the cat out of the bag," he added.

" What cat ? " asked the girl, speaking for the first time.

" Just before letting myself into your house, I saw you meet a young man. Not realizing that I was telling him news, I told your father what I had seen."

" How provoking ! " The girl's face hardened. " What did father say ? "

" Not much."

" What did the not much convey to you ? "

" That he was far from pleased."

" I should think so. And I am downright angry."

Diana turned quickly and gazed in the direction of the Underground railway-station.

" There is just a chance that I can overtake Aleck before he catches a train," she said, speaking to herself ; then, paying no heed to appearances or the burglar, the girl dashed for the Underground station with the speed of a hockey player while the burglar trotted after her. As they approached the station they heard a train roar in, pause its fifteen seconds, and roar out again, and when Diana got a view of the " up " platform it was bare. She shot one contemptuous, angry glance at the puffing burglar, then, without a word, turned on her heel and hurried off towards her father's house.

THE burglar now felt wild with himself. He had put his great foot smack into it, and the charming girl was deeply hurt. This hurt him also, and he stood, his gaze following the girl whose brain was so filled with annoyance and in such a tumult from thoughts of her lover and her father that she had not the least idea she was making for her home as fast as ever she could run.

As she disappeared the burglar turned to enter the station to book for Mark Lane, and his eyes caught sight of a man coming out of the tobacconist's over the way, and intent on filling his pipe, saunter leisurely across the road. The burglar grinned, for he recognized that there stood Aleck. Quite brazenly he addressed the young man.

" Aleck, you are wanted."

The young man started, straightened his shoulders, and looked hard at the burglar. He said, haughtily crisp :—

" I beg your pardon ? "

" Diana wants you."

The young man glared, then exclaimed :—

" And who the deuce are you ? "

" A friend who has been and gone and

given the show away. First, I told Mr. Wigmore that a young man—you—was waiting for his daughter when she went out for an airing. That upset him. Then I told Diana that I had told her father, and that upset her. She fled back here, hoping to intercept Aleck, but failed to find you. Now, as fast, she has fled home. I suggest that you follow her."

"You seem to have been fairly successful in doing the wrong thing at the right time," barked Aleck. "How does it come that you take such a keen interest in the Wigmores and their friends?"

"Mr. Wigmore is my favourite author. I dropped in to have a chat with him."

"I am sure we are all deeply obliged to you," the young man said, sarcastically.

"Very well. Now oblige me," said the burglar, cheerfully. "Oblige me by following Diana. I fancy your lady-love may require your help when she meets her father. If all is on the square, you will not fail to go to her assistance. If all is not on the square, why, then I'm glad I have told her father."

Without a word the young man strode off in the direction of the Wigmores' home.

"I think that just about finishes the complications as far as I am concerned," the burglar muttered, as he made his way towards the barrier to have his ticket punched, and to descend to the platform. In this fancy he was wrong, for before he passed the barrier a man confronted him.

"Just a moment," this man said, peremptorily. "Perhaps you won't mind giving me an explanation of your movements this evening."

The burglar guessed at once that the man was a detective, and he guessed aright.

"You've been following me?"

The detective nodded.

"You know who I am?"

"I have seen you somewhere, and my recollection of you, although dim and misty, leads me to believe you are a burglar. But I cannot recall your name, or where before this I saw you. A little while ago I spotted you, and thought you would pay following. Your movements have been most mysterious. I saw you slip into a house that was burglarized last week. I knew the house to be empty except for a temporarily blind man. I peered through a chink in the blinds and saw you seated chatting with Mr. Wigmore. You moved about the room, but the chink did not allow my gaze to follow you. I saw Mr. Wigmore write something in a book for you."

"His autograph," said the burglar, jauntily pulling the book from his pocket and exhibiting the flyleaf. "This autograph is the only thing I carried away with me."

"I believe you stole something when you were in that house."

"Why not search me? If I had taken anything, it will be on me."

"Later on I may search; at the moment I suggest that we return to Mr. Wigmore, and hear what he has to say about your visit."

The burglar became exceedingly concerned because of the state of Wigmore's health.

"He's suffering much pain. It will be better not to trouble him any more to-night. Without wishing to do anything of the kind, I gave him a bit of news about his daughter which upset him. There's a family council on at the moment, and I think it will not be a good time to break in upon them."

"I'll chance that," said the detective, with decision. "Come along."

For a man who claimed that he had nothing to hide, the burglar seemed strangely loath to go back to the house of his favourite author. The detective noticed this, and it caused him to feel sure that consideration for the author's feelings was not responsible for the burglar's hesitation. Was it likely that a burglar had come out of a house empty-handed?

"Come voluntarily or else I'll place you under arrest," said the detective, gruffly.

With a shrug of his shoulders the burglar obeyed.

WHEN Diana stood before her father he did not greet her return quite as buoyantly cordial as was his custom, and soon relapsed into silence. The girl stood for a little while gazing down upon him, her eyes big from sympathy and love. She advanced and placed her hand lovingly on his shoulder.

"Dear dad," she said, "you have heard what you think is bad news of me."

"I have, Diana. But how do you know?"

"A stranger—a strange-looking man—stopped me in the street to tell me. He seemed to be sorry."

"Informing a father of something of vital moment to his beloved daughter is not a matter to sorrow over!"

The girl dropped to her knees and took one of his hands between her two palms.

"Yes, dad, I have been keeping a secret from you—a great big secret; but it's a good great big secret, dad, it really is. You'll never guess the dodges I was compelled to resort to so that the secret should remain a secret till the proper time. A great desire to tell you would keep bubbling up in my heart till the pain of repressing it made me fly to my room and bury my face in the pillow and scream a silent scream. I was so impatient to delight you, dad dear. Really it's two secrets, but you should have the use of your eyes for one of them. That's why we kept it so long from you. But that horrid

man has blundered and alarmed you. I cannot have my dear old dad remain in anxiety, so here I place surprise the first in your hands."

"A book, Diana?"

"Your very own daughter's very own first novel, dad. And, oh! I wish you could see just what a perfectly scrumptious volume Aleck has made of it: the lovely paper, lovely print, lovely binding, the beautiful design of the cover made especially for my 'The Lover at the Gate.' I wanted you so much to have the full use of your eyes."

"'The Lover at the Gate'! Your first book! Tell me?"

"It was such fun. Up in my room I wrote a love story. It took me a year to write it, and you never guessed what I was doing. I carried the MS. to your own publishers, and I had an interview with Aleck."

"The junior partner of the firm? Aleck Bannerman?"

"He's the second secret, dad."

"My dear girl!" cried her father before the girl could say another word. "My precious girl, it was wicked of me to doubt you! Bless your heart, why didn't you bring Aleck home with you to-night?"

A resolute tug set the door-bell merrily ajangle. Diana jumped to her feet, cast one swift glance about to see that the room was presentable, then hurried to the front door. The author heard her exclaim "Aleck!" then cry over her shoulder:—

"Dad, dearest, you've got your wish. Here's surprise the second himself."

Below the bandages on the author's face there rippled a broad smile. Wigmore arose and stood with his hand held out in greeting, and as the two men shook hands again Diana cried in surprise:—

"What's this on the mantelpiece?"

Her father heard his daughter dash across the room.

"My beloved necklace!" she cried, in delighted astonishment. "And, dad, a roll of Treasury notes! And here's a scrawl: 'In return for an autograph'!"

Before the edge of their surprise at the recovery of the stolen property had worn off, the front door was heard to be flung open, and a voice sang out:—

"A friend of mine, a detective, would like me to introduce you, Mr. Wigmore. May I bring him in?"

WITHOUT awaiting permission the fellow stepped into the sitting-room. The detective followed. Diana and Bannerman stood gazing upon the newcomers. Wigmore, too, had faced them, although he could see nothing.

"Ah!" said the burglar, grinning and addressing Diana. "You look pleased."

"I am pleased," admitted the blushing girl, dangling her newly-recovered necklace before her face for all to behold.

The detective raised his brows in surprise. The burglar turned to him.

"You say you dimly remember having seen me somewhere, sometime. How's this for a refresher? 'The Eccentric Burglar.' Does that awaken any remembrance?"

"Of course," exclaimed the detective in a burst. "The newspapers called you 'The Eccentric Burglar.' Your name is Eccles, you are of independent means, yet you cannot keep from breaking into houses and creating a muddle. Four years ago you were had up for entering the offices of two K.C.'s engaged on different sides of an important case and exchanging their briefs. I caught one glimpse of you at the New Bailey."

The burglar, nodding his head vigorously, laughed.

"Yes, I'm the Eccentric. This, my latest eccentricity, came about in this way. I read Mr. Wigmore's novel, 'Leap Over the Precipice.' One of the characters in the book is a burglar, and he's the finest character of the lot. That tickled me immensely. When a man pleases me I do him a good turn if I can. I worked it out that if I burglarized this house, the news would appear in the newspapers from one end of the land to the other and Mr. Wigmore would find himself the recipient of a mighty big advertisement. So last week I slipped in here and burglarized the place. The advertisement followed just as I thought it would."

"You ran some risks over your philanthropy," said the detective.

"What risks?"

"If any time during the last week the valuables had been found on you I don't think your advertising story would have helped you much."

"The goods could not have been found on me," said the burglar, pertly.

"How so?"

"The goods were never on me. I run no risks that I can help. I did not take the necklace and the money away with me. Instead, I stuffed them down between the back and the cushion of this sofa. That's why the gold plate was not missing. I couldn't stuff it with the rest, it's too bulky.

He stood pointing to the sofa in the room in which they stood.

"I gave the matter one week's run, then looked in here to cause the property to reappear. When talking with Mr. Wigmore I dug the precious necklace and the notes from their hiding-place and deposited them on the mantelpiece. I got Mr. Wigmore's autograph and came away."

After a pause during which the eccentric burglar beamed on everyone present, rubbing his palms together as one who has

Diana and Bannerman stood gazing upon the new-comers. Wigmore, too, had faced them, although he could see nothing.

accomplished something very splendid, he suddenly demanded of the detective :—

" Now, what about it ? "

The detective shrugged his shoulders.

" Are you satisfied that what I have said is the truth ? " asked the burglar, touching Mr. Wigmore's shoulder to let the author know the question was addressed to him.

"More than merely satisfied. I really think you've done me a thundering good turn. I find myself grateful to you," replied the author.

" And so am I very, very grateful," cried Diana, glancing from her father to Bannerman, then to the burglar, who grinned broader than ever.

" Oh, very well ! " exclaimed the detective, washing his hands of the whole affair. He shot a straight glance at the burglar.

" Take my advice and cut off."

" The very thing I was doing when you stopped me," laughed the burglar, making for the door.

HOW TO MAKE THE BEST OF LIFE

by

Arnold Bennett

III.—THE BUSINESS OF EDUCATION.

THE object of education is to prepare us for complete living. Herbert Spencer said this, and as one of his most fervent admirers I agree with him, though I doubt whether he himself knew what "complete living" is. Even assuming him to have been as ill as he thought he was, his own existence could not be described as a satisfactory illustration of the value of his own theories. Indeed, a man who would stuff his ears up in order to escape the conversation of his friends was without doubt strongly desirous of living incompletely. Nevertheless, the educational theories of Spencer, which are now at least seventy years old, still powerfully survive. I only mention his case as a warning to those, especially the young and cocksure, who assume that their practice is bound to accord with their theory. It is a fact that the people who are best satisfied with their own education are too often the very people who don't know how to live, either completely or incompletely.

Anyhow, here we all are, with a mechanism of body and mind, destined to spend a certain amount of time in the universe of which each of us is the centre. And the problem of complete living is the problem of getting the best and the fullest we can out of the strange adventure. Query: What should be the curriculum of our education? The query, of course, cannot be adequately answered. The most we can do towards finding an answer is to enumerate certain branches of knowledge and discipline without which it is obvious that complete living cannot possibly be achieved.

For instance, there is the aforesaid mechanism of body and mind. This is our instrument, machine, or apparatus for the earthly task. And we have nothing else. If our bodies are not efficiently working, our minds cannot work efficiently (and probably *vice versa*), and complete living is at once scotched. Not one human machine in a million will keep itself in order. Human machines need constant attention, and they cannot be attended to properly if they are not understood. Hence some knowledge of human physiology (the science of our body and its functions) and of psychology (the science of our mind and its functions) is an essential preliminary to complete living, and no branch of education can be regarded as more important than this.

Unless you have some sound information about, and comprehension of, your own organism, you are in a situation similar to, but far worse than, that of the man who is given a beautiful car and starts to drive it away without ascertaining the principles of the engine and what the levers and other exterior gadgets really signify. He may go some distance and avoid trouble, but it is absolutely sure that he will not get the best out of the car, nearly sure that he will damage it, and fairly sure that he will have a breakdown. All which, again, is obvious, and I

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ought to apologize for stating it to an enlightened public.

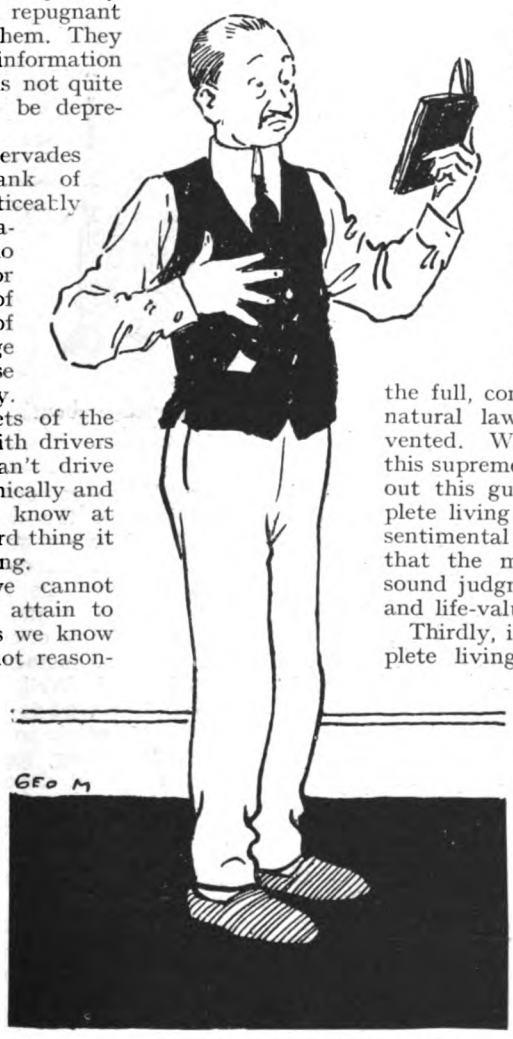
And yet who among us can put his hand on his liver and say with certainty: "My liver is exactly there"—the liver being the largest organ in the human frame? Why, most people don't know where the stomach is until they get a pain therein; and they imagine that their lungs are a kind of twin bags which they fill with fresh air when they breathe. They do not suspect that mental fatigue produces an actual physical poison, or that the skin itself is an excretory organ of high importance, or that a yawn is primarily a sign of defective aeration. They exist in a condition of dangerous ignorance. They are aware of this ignorance, and they rather like it, and the notion of curing it by a course of study is repugnant and even shocking to them. They consider that detailed information about their interiors is not quite nice, and, indeed, to be deprecated.

Such ignorance pervades every intellectual rank of society, and it is noticeably rife among our educational mandarins, who habitually prescribe for certain large sections of young students a rule of life which is an outrage against common sense and common decency. In a word, the streets of the universe are packed with drivers of motor-cars who can't drive because they most comically and most tragically don't know at all what sort of a weird thing it is they are shoving along.

Again, just as we cannot reasonably expect to attain to complete living unless we know *what* we are, we cannot reasonably expect the same unless we know *where* we are, both in time and in space. We must at any rate have some general knowledge about the earth to which we are clinging as it whirls. After all, the earth is not so very big—and travelling makes it smaller every year! The sun is immensely larger than the earth, and there are stars so huge that if they were put where the sun is they would occupy the whole space of the earth's orbit—and a lot more beside. Therefore we need not be frightened of the earth as a subject. We ought to have some concise knowledge of universal geography and of universal history. The two go together and are properly inseparable, and the point of them is that they show us where we stand.

We shall learn from geography the importance of environment, and from history the annoying but useful truth that all acts have consequences, and that those consequences cannot be escaped. Also that society is for ever moving on, evolving out of something into something else; that there is nothing final or absolute; no goal, but a succession of goals; that everything is always in a state of flux or change, and that this is the very essence and meaning of life! Such knowledge will be reinforced by some study of science in its main principles. Through combining geography and history with some science, and in no other way, shall we become possessed of the supreme idea of evolution fortified by the full, conscious conviction that natural laws cannot be circumvented. Without a realization of this supreme conception, and without this guiding conviction, complete living can be naught but a sentimental dream, for the reason that the material is lacking for sound judgment of aims, conduct, and life-values generally.

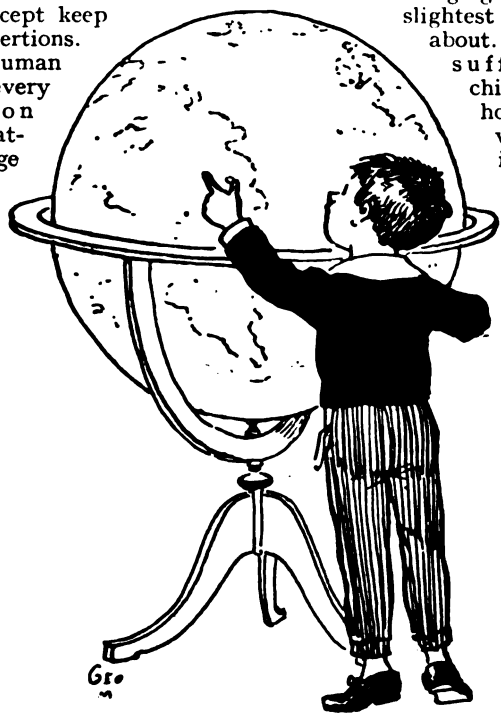
Thirdly, it is obvious that complete living cannot be achieved unless our education enables us to develop our faculties in such a way as to earn a livelihood. The chief thing after all is to keep alive and to perform the feat with pleasure to ourselves. No use or sense in magnificently educating ourselves for complete living if in the end we have to depend on others for our bread-and-butter, or if we can only earn our bread-and-butter



Who can put his hand on his liver and say with certainty: "My liver is exactly there"?

in ways that are repugnant to us! Before it is anything, living is, and ought to be, a business proposition; and no human specimen is more absurd than he who can do everything except keep himself by his own exertions.

Further, as every human being is a citizen, every scheme of education should comprise the attainment of knowledge concerning the rights and duties of citizenship. The welfare of the State depends upon every citizen individually exercising his rights and performing his duties in a sagacious manner. Every citizen should know the essentials about national and local government, and about the difficulties which beset governing bodies, from the highest to the lowest, under whose sway he is. It should be equally impossible for a windbag on the parish council, or for a knave in Parliament, to dupe him by spouting theatricalities. He cannot be said to have reached complete living until he has opinions of his own, and informed opinions, which will enable him to be a citizen to his own advantage and to the advantage of the community.



We must have some general knowledge about the earth to which we are clinging.

And then, no man can be sure of living completely unless he studies the principles and practice of education as a subject in itself. One's own individual education must include a comprehension of education in general. Why? When he has dealt with his own case, why must the individual trouble about general principles? It was Herbert Spencer, a bachelor, who answered that as the chances are in favour of every individual becoming a parent, every individual should understand the subject of education in order that he may do justice to his children. The majority of parents are agreed that parenthood, though admittedly it satisfies a profound instinct, and may give intense joy, is a terrible responsibility, cause of friction and worry, and source of disappointment. The black side of parenthood could naturally never be abolished, but assuredly its blackness would be mitigated if parents knew a little better what they were about. As a fact, they too often start out on the tremendously difficult enterprise of bringing up children without the slightest idea of what they are about. They blunder; they suffer; the unfortunate children suffer; and the hope of complete living vanishes. A man may indeed live completely until he becomes a parent, and then find himself faced with complications which he had utterly forgotten to prepare himself for, and from a success he deteriorates into a failure. He has not looked ahead far enough. At twenty it did not occur to him to think of what is involved in the vast affair of producing the next generation; and quite possibly, if anybody had suggested to him that he should arm himself for fatherhood, he would have laughed as the young laugh at mere priggishness. And he would have been wrong. When you are a parent it is already rather late in the day to begin training yourself to be a parent.

Finally, no man can claim to be living completely until he has acquired definite standards of right and wrong, and therefore any sound scheme of education must have a department of morals. More priggishness, some will say! Well, they must say it.

I do not pretend to have mentioned all of even the essentials to living completely. I have said nothing, for example, about the subject of social deportment. Nor of the subject of the utilization of leisure in diversion—nobody can amuse and distract himself satisfactorily by merely wishing to do so, and many otherwise completely-living men have fallen short of completeness in this very respect. Both these subjects are essentials.

EDUCATION FOR WOMEN.

I have been employing the word "man," but it should be taken in the generic sense, to include women also, and my remarks are addressed impartially to both sexes.

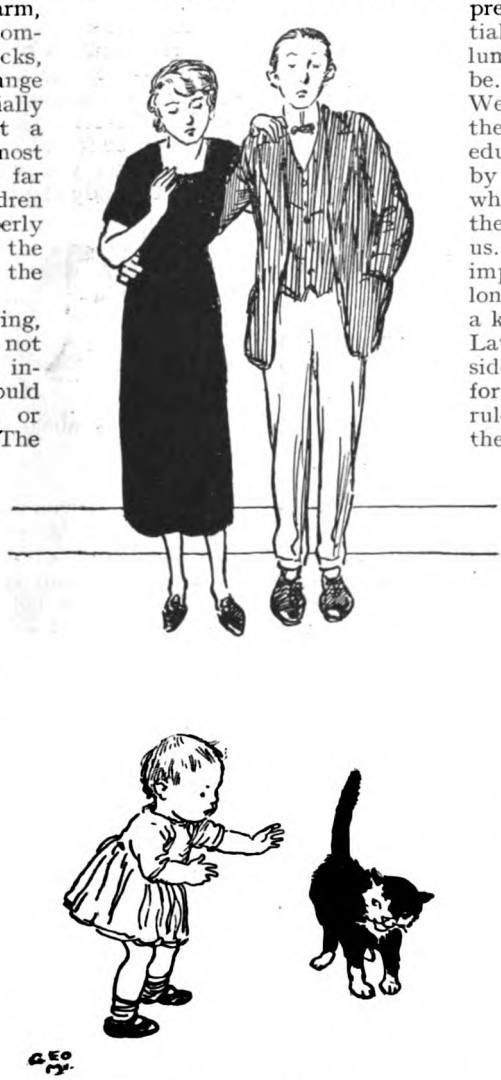
Although I do not hold that women should receive education, and should educate themselves, in the same way as men, I do uncompromisingly hold that a woman's education should comprise everything that I have already mentioned. I can conceive no reason why, for example, a woman should not be acquainted with the structure of the society in which she has to live, the manner in which it is developing—from what previous state into what future state, and the machinery by means of which it functions. Nor do I see how she can live completely without this knowledge. Nor do I think that she is in any way constitutionally debarred from acquiring this knowledge. Nor do I think that the acquirement of such knowledge is incompatible with charm, sentiment, a good complexion, agreeable frocks, and the right to change her mind. And especially I do not think that a woman, who, in the most important years, has far more to do with children than a man, can properly neglect the study of the general principles of the science of education.

As for earning her living, every adult who is not physically or mentally incapable of doing so should pay by work for his or her place in society. The work, of course, may not be remunerated in money, but it will always be remunerated by something that money represents. The main activity of a very large proportion of women is, and always will be, housekeeping. Most women, I regret to say, keep house amateurishly, because they have never been taught, or have never taken the trouble to learn, the craft of housekeeping in a common-sense and thorough way. The majority of them "pick it up" from other amateurs, and the grand result is that they themselves, and the persons for whom they keep house, are prevented by friction and inefficiency from living completely—complete living being a highly delicate affair that is only too easily disorganized by trifling mishaps.

This attitude and this judgment concerning women will be resented, perhaps violently; but, then, nothing on earth arouses more violent resentment than the ruthless, unchangeable course of evolution. Excellent and well-meaning and very nice persons call it all sorts of bad names. It just calmly proceeds. And evolution is undoubtedly in the directions which I have indicated.

FITTING THE MEANS TO THE END.

Even males may be rather agitated by my presentation of the essentials of a sound curriculum. And well they may be. I am disturbed myself. We are so accustomed to the fashions of the day in education, and so obsessed by them, that anything which cuts right across them is bound to upset us. True, education has improved. We are no longer in the period when a knowledge of Greek and Latin was arbitrarily considered a sufficient outfit for a man intending to rule his fellows, and when the skill to talk French, sing, play, and embroider, was all that public opinion demanded from the mothers of the flower of the race. But the said period is not yet very far behind us. Even to-day there are men who arbitrarily will say of another man who does not know the difference between Charlotte Brontë and Emily Brontë: "The fellow is uneducated." And there are men who will arbitrarily say of another man who is not aware that the resistance of water to a body moving through it varies as the square of the speed of the body: "The fellow is



Parenthood is a terrible responsibility.

There are women who will say of a woman who hasn't seen the Russian Ballet: "Poor thing! She is frightfully ignorant."

uneducated." Similarly, there are women who arbitrarily will say of a woman who hasn't seen the Russian Ballet, or is unfamiliar with the history of the suffrage movement: "Poor thing! She is frightfully ignorant."

We have an insufficient sense of proportion in our view of education. We permit ourselves to be astonished and scornful at the absence of certain fashionable scraps of knowledge, while accepting with equanimity the absence of whole bunches of knowledge that are of primary urgency. And we are thus because we do not put any curriculum to a proper test. In fact, we have no proper test, for the reason that we generally forget to ask ourselves what is the aim of education. At the best we seize on something silly in a given curriculum, and strike it fiercely out, or we stick some missing detail in, and think we have arrived at perfection.

The way of approach is wrong. We begin by examining the means to the end instead of first ascertaining what the end is. If we first defined and clearly envisaged the end, we should be in a better position to pass a verdict on the means. I am inclined to think that no existing curriculum of any well-known educational institution has been framed exclusively in the light of the notion that the object of education is to attain complete living. And in the great historical institutions, such as the older universities, this obviously would be impossible; for they are, and must be, ruled by tradition, and can only be modified by very slow degrees. That they are being modified is much.

And here the hasty should be warned against an unreflecting wholesale condemnation of existing curriculums. The tendency of all boys, and of nearly all young men, is to exclaim that such and such a subject is perfectly futile in the practice of after-life. It may or it may not be, but to decide definitely whether it is or is not might be difficult. We should have no bathrooms, railway-bridges, flying-machines, cure for diphtheria, antiseptic operations, if certain obstinate students had not insisted on studying subjects which the great wise world, with cheerful disdain, held to be perfectly futile. My complaint against existing curriculums is not that they are full of futilities—they are not—but that they show a lack of proportion and ignore essentials. I wonder whether a single educational institution could be found in this island where it is obligatory for young men and women over twenty to study the principles of the science

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of education. Which is equivalent to wondering whether there is a single educational expert who has effectively remembered that one of the chief purposes of young men and women is to become parents of well-brought-up and satisfactory children.

WHEN SELF-EDUCATION STARTS.

The best education is self-education. Indeed, all education is tending more and more towards self-education. The child is encouraged to find knowledge for himself instead of having knowledge forced into him under a kind of hydraulic pressure. Learning by rote is being abandoned. General principles and natural laws are taking the place of rules, and, in short, schools bear a far less striking resemblance to purgatory than they used to do. Even the best schools, however, have one characteristic—they do not allow boys and girls to be their own masters and mistresses. It is after leaving school that real education starts—or should start. So that those earnest young persons who consider that their schooldays have been wasted need not repine or weep over the years that are gone beyond recall. Ninety-nine excuses out of a hundred made by the uneducated for their lack of education will not bear serious examination.

There are two classes of pupils leaving school—a very small class, those who proceed to a university, and a very large class, those who proceed direct into the world. I will take the small class first. In former days only a tiny percentage of this small class had any genuine interest in their own education. The majority attended a university with the avowed intention to learn as little as possible, and to have as great a lark as possible. This is now changed, even in the ancient and highly conservative universities. The majority of undergraduates are as earnest as a dog with a bone. And the curious fact is that the more earnest they are, the more apt they are to call their university bad names, and to insist that it is nearly everything a university ought not to be, and that the authorities show extraordinary ingenuity in rendering education difficult or impossible. Which attitude is pardonable (because of its earnestness), but absurd and egotistic.

The earnest undergraduate seems to have one grand leading idea, namely, that his university ought to be planned, established, and specially arranged to meet the requirements of his own particular case. Now the university does not regard the affair in quite this light. The earnest undergraduate is important; he may be as important as a whole town, but compared to the university, he is somewhat like a town built by a river.

The child is encouraged to find knowledge for himself.

The river was there centuries before the town, and it will be there centuries after the town has vanished. The town is a mere incident in the life of the river. The individual undergraduate is a mere incident in the life of the university. The university caters, and must cater, for the average undergraduate. There is no average undergraduate, really. Hence every undergraduate must adapt himself more or less—and usually rather more than less—to the university.

The more strenuous the student the more adaptation has to be performed. But the most singular, peculiar, and purposeful student can, if he is modest enough, discover somewhere in the university the material necessary for his education. Idle for him to inveigh against old-fashioned fixed courses of study. He must be clever enough to use them usefully. Idle for him to cry out upon the lack of apparatus. The finest work has always been done with the most primitive apparatus.

Idle for him to criticize dons, tutors, and professors. He is his own chief don, tutor, professor. The university will never educate him; it will merely provide a field where he can educate himself. And it will leave him free to exploit the vast organization as he chooses. There are certain physical things that the university will not permit to him, but he is essentially free, and herein is one

of the greatest advantages of a university. If it genuinely teaches anything, it teaches the student to manage himself, and places but small obstacles in the way of him making a perfect fool of himself if he so chooses. This is a high virtue in a university. Not that I am indiscriminately praising universities. Far from it! Universities are not more perfect than undergraduates—and not less. Universities are terribly deficient. And I hate to hear reactionary fathers saying that the deficiencies don't really matter since a youth goes to a university to meet his fellows and lead the communal life and accustom himself to self-reliance and the art of give-and-take. If the universities had no educational deficiencies, the youth would still meet his fellows and live the communal life and acquire self-reliance, and so on. But, on the other hand, I do hate to hear earnest undergraduates discoursing upon their unique difficulties. University education cannot be handed out complete like a cake on a tray. It has to be fought for, intrigued for, conspired for, lied for, and sometimes simply stolen. If it had not it would scarcely be education.

FREE STUDENTS IN THE WORLD.

I come now to the immensely larger class of students leaving school, those who do not proceed to a university. Many among them, of course, sell their school-books and thank Heaven they have done with education for the rest of their lives. But many, having perceived that school is merely the portico of the vast mansion of knowledge, seriously determine to get inside. These will either attend evening-classes or pursue private study, or do both. In any case, the disadvantages are considerable—and not the least disadvantage is the lack of time. But the advantage of untrammelled freedom within such leisure as they have is tremendous and inspiring. They can follow their own ideas in the execution of the gigantic affair of learning to understand, sympathize with, and enjoy the world, and of fulfilling themselves so that they shall live completely. They have everything to choose from. They are at liberty to make their own mistakes and to correct them in their own way. They are genuinely entitled to say that they are engaged in *self*-education. I can imagine few spectacles more exhilarating than the spectacle of the young man or girl sitting down eagerly to the great business. The idea of the first evening, or the first early morning, positively palpitates with drama. The only thing that might reconcile me to growing young again would be the marvellous opportunity of starting quite afresh to educate myself.

To many students not the least disadvantage is the lack of time.

Naturally and rightly, all young students are extremely ingenuous. Simple-minded creatures, with hopes as absurd as their methods! But they are fine. And their mistakes would be reduced to a minimum if they would bear in mind a few obvious considerations. There are, for instance, two preliminary considerations. The first is that in the young a feeling of indolence and a disinclination for effort are almost always a sign that the physical organism is out of gear. Healthy young people are never indolent. They cannot be. Energy doesn't trickle out of them; it bursts out of them. The feeling of indolence, therefore, should be treated physically rather than mentally. The second consideration is that boredom in study proves either that the subject is distasteful (but none of my essential subjects could be distasteful to a representative mind), or that the method of study is wrong. All study, all self-education, should be interesting. If it is not, then it wants altering. Of course, a small percentage of individuals are incapable of education under even the most favourable circumstances; and they must reconcile themselves to incomplete living. They have been born moribund. Dullness is their appointed portion, and there is nothing more to be said.

These two preliminary considerations having been dealt with, we can pass on. The most important advice to be offered to the fortunate band of enthusiasts for self-education is not to begin to specialize too early. Moreover, many people, while

conscious of a keen desire for knowledge, do not at first feel a desire for any special knowledge, though in the end they are bound to specialize, for the mere matter-of-fact reason that nobody will be silly enough to try to know everything in the same degree. These undecided persons are apt to fall into the error of deciding impulsively for the mere sake of deciding, and to decide wrongly: which means wasted energy and a new start. They would do well to indulge in a period of wide miscellaneous browsing over the limitless fields of knowledge, till the interior voice indicates the true direction. It is probable that the most successful self-educators have begun with an orgy of indiscriminate mental voracity. But even when the true direction is never in doubt, specialization should not be hurried. General education must precede special education, or the consequences will be lopsidedness, lack of proportion, and incomplete living in an intensified form. Specialization must have a firm basis, enormously broader than itself. No special branch of knowledge can be fully understood alone. It must be put into relation with the whole sum of knowledge. And whether the specialization has to do with one's livelihood, or whether it is an end in itself, the rule holds. Further, if the fullest possible amount of vital happiness is to be achieved, the entire process of self-education must be conducted with that object in view.

The most important advice to enthusiasts for self-education is not to begin to specialize too early.

It would be untrue to say that life is too short for both general and special education. Life is neither too long nor too short; it has the right length. And the more sagaciously it is employed, the longer it will appear to be. General and special education can undoubtedly be fitted into the span of existence, and, in any case, it is better to learn to live well generally than to learn to live well in one particular, neglecting all the other particulars. A man who slips into this error is like the athlete who over-develops his muscles and dies early from heart disease. The plan of education must be carefully laid. And the execution of the plan must be constantly checked by its action upon the life lived. In the ardour of self-education, the aim of education is too often quite lost sight of, and, without knowing it, the devotee veers further and further away from the goal. Is it not notorious that the studious don't know how to live, and are strangers in the world—in which every man should be ashamed to be a stranger? If education does not teach you to like life, does not create a wish to get closer to life, and to various sorts of life, does not show you that no sort of life is unworthy to be understood or devoid of interest, does not inspire you to plunge deeply into the great stream of existence instead of standing in priggish repudiation on the banks—if it does not do all this, then it is futile. It is indeed a waste of time, and a man might as well be employed in counting sheep as they pass through a gate.

Lastly, it is to be remembered, in all solemnity, that though education has a beginning, there is no end to it. The more you know the more you find you don't know. Only the wisest know what fools they are, and this realizing of unwisdom is the supreme sensation, for it puts one in one's place, and displays the wonder of life as nothing else can. As education widens, so does the marvellous vision of the universe widen, and the idea of God take a more noble and mighty shape. Men who have learned to live completely in the everyday sense will die in the attempt to live still more completely. The sight of a man striving after knowledge in his last years, strenuously using the remnant of existence to add treasure to treasure, has excited the laughter of the thoughtless, who demand: "What will he be able to do with it?" Nobody knows what he will be able to do with it. But unless all science is built upon a total falsity, nothing is or can be lost, either on this side the grave or the other. It is asserted that we know, and can know with certainty, nothing about the other side of the grave. We ought to know this, anyhow, that ultimate waste will not occur.

NEXT MONTH: "STARTING IN LIFE."

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

606.—DIGITAL SQUARES.

THE nine digits may be arranged in a square in many ways so that the numbers formed in the first row and second row will sum to the third row. I give three examples, and it will be found that the difference between the first total, 657, and the second, 819, is

2	1	8
4	3	9
6	5	7

-

2	7	3
5	4	6
8	1	9

3	2	7
6	5	4
9	8	1

the same as the difference between the second, 819, and the third, 981; that is, 162. Now, can you form eight such squares, every one containing the nine digits, so that the common difference between the eight totals is throughout the same? Of course, it will not be 162. I proposed the question to myself and was surprised to find how easily it may be done. Yet it needs a little preliminary thought.

607.—LETTER MULTIPLICATION.

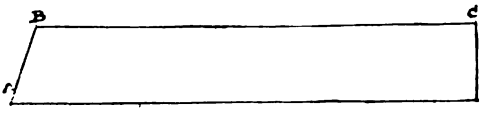
HERE is a little multiplication sum in which the six letters employed represent six digits. One of these digits is a 5 and there is no 0. What are the actual figures? It is important to note that the six letters in the product are repeated in the multiplicand and multiplier. This is a guide to the solution, though the puzzle, perhaps, is not very easy.

N D T S A
R

S T R A N D

608.—FOLDING A PENTAGON.

I SHOWED in our issue for February, 1919, that a perfect pentagon may be formed from a ribbon of paper by simply tying it into an ordinary knot and pressing flat, and in February last we saw how a square piece of paper may be folded to form a pentagon. For the latter I expressed my indebtedness to Mr. T. Sundara Row, of Madras, and this gentleman now sends me some exceedingly clever and interesting extensions of the problem. The exercises are, for the most part, too difficult for these pages, but I derive



from one of them the following elegant curiosity, which is intended to interest rather than to perplex, for the reader will hit on the solution immediately.

Given a ribbon of paper, as in the illustration, of any length—say more than four times as long as broad—it can all be folded into a perfect pentagon with every part lying within the boundaries of the figure. The only condition is that the angle A B C must be the correct angle of two contiguous sides of a regular pentagon. How are you to fold it?

609.—MISSING WORDS.

THE following sentences, by C. A. V., will be found to read quite naturally when the missing words are supplied. Each missing word contains as many letters as there are dots, a new letter being added at every step, like a, an, nap, pant, paint, etc.

"No; . do not like . .," said the man in a black . . . on a sad occasion; "though the . . . . we have just witnessed was certainly impressive. If you . . . . . a man, you . . . . . a . . . . . power of reinvestigation; and there will be a . . . . . against . . . . . when the . . . . . of this is recognized."

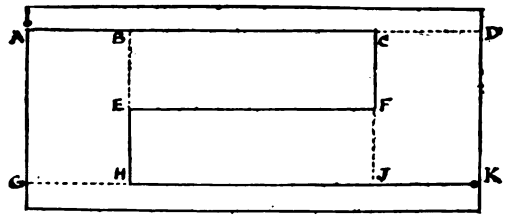
610.—A CHESS CHARADE.

AFTER tea I had challenged my ***whole*** to a game;
But results I so faultily reckoned,
I got into my ***first***, and, alas, to my shame,
I could not get out of my ***second***.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

602.—MARKING A TENNIS COURT.

THE 10 points lettered in the illustration are all "odd nodes," that is points from which you can go in an odd number of directions—three. Therefore we know that five lines (one half of 10) will be required to draw the figure. The dotted lines will be the four shortest possible between nodes. Note that you



cannot here use a node twice or it would be an improvement to make E H and C F dotted lines instead of C D and G H. Having fixed our four shortest lines, the remainder may all be drawn in one continuous line from A to K, as shown. When you get to D you must run up to C and back to D, from G go to H and back, and so on. Or you can wait until you get to C and go to D and back, etc. The dotted lines will thus be gone over twice and the method shown gives us the minimum distance that must be thus repeated.

603.—TWO ANAGRAMS.

THE answers are ONE WORD and THE WIGS.

604.—ANOTHER OLD ENIGMA.

THE answer is SLEEP.

605.—THE MUDBURY WAR MEMORIAL.

THE number of posts in hand must have been 180, and the length of the enclosing line 330 feet. Then, at a foot asunder, they would require 150 more, but at a yard apart 110 would suffice and they would have 70 too many.

"What is your name, little boy?" she asked, looking down at him all smiles and dimples.

A PECK OF TROUBLE

by AUGUSTUS MUIR

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GILLETT R.I

AT a milliner's window in Bond Street, Lady Babington (*née* Catkins, of New York, and now wife of an English baronet) paused. But it was not the hats that caught her fancy; indeed, her back was to the disdained creations of some nimble-fingered being with a Parisian name and a Peckham parentage. It was a figure by the kerb that drew Lady Babington to a stop.

The figure by the kerb, though small, was arresting: a boy, seven or eight years old. He had a sad face, with very wise grey eyes, and tousled hair that stuck out, like the eaves of a thatched roof, from beneath a dirty Balmoral bonnet. His knees, brown as Brazil nuts, fronted the world under the fringe of a tiny kilt that had once rollicked in all the colours of the Royal Stewart tartan, but was now the neutral tint of haggis. In his right hand was a tin bowl. This, with an appealing gesture, he extended to Bond Street.

His left hand gripped the tails of an overcoat, once black but now so green that one almost had the illusion of nigh pastures with grazing sheep. Inside the rustic overcoat was an old man, shaggy of beard, gnarled of fist, bent of back, and—as a printed ticket told the world—blind. Tucked away into the beard was the butt end of a fiddle, which he sawed with ferocity.

Between the old man and the small boy sat a fox-terrier dog with a bright eye and an exploring nose. He was tethered to the old man's braces. He had an obvious distaste for the fumes of automobiles, and with bared teeth darted yearning glances at their

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departing back tyres. But he solaced himself by occasionally licking the small boy's knees.

"Charming!" whispered Lady Babington to herself, the feather in her toque waving in acclamation like the ensign on a battleship. She stepped forward.

She thrilled in every fibre with a slowly forming determination that had long been a vague resolve.

"What is your name, little boy?" she asked, looking down at him all smiles and dimples.

"Hector," said the boy, the tin bowl of beggary moving forward a couple of inches.

"Hector? Ah! And how is the old man to-day?"

"Fine, thanks." The tin bowl again moved two inches.

"How is business?"

"Fine, thanks," said Hector. He looked at the tin bowl. "Might be better," he added, reflectively and with deep meaning.

As Lady Babington's half-crown tinkled into the bowl the ancient minstrel ceased fiddling, removed his shaggy tam-o'-shanter bonnet, and abased himself. "Half a croon," whispered Hector, behind his cupped hand. The minstrel again abased himself nearly to the kerb. Lady Babington patted the small boy's head. "Good-bye, Hector," she murmured, turning away.

And there was a sob in her voice. But the sob was a sob of fiercely vivid joy that sprang from a suddenly forming resolution.

LADY BABINGTON was a sticker. From the moment the founder of the tribe of Catkins had been helped down the *Mayflower* gang-plank, very green about the gills, and announced that here he was and here he meant to stay, the Catkins had all been notable as stickers. She was one of these Go-and-get-it women. As a thinker, she could do four thousand revolutions per minute on full throttle. And to compare her actions with forked lightning was to conjure up the picture of an illuminated snail lagging sluggishly along a zigzag path on a blue-black sky.

She made up her mind at 6.30 that she would adopt Hector, and within ten minutes was stepping into her car to get him. She knew in an instant where to find Hector and the old man. She had followed them on sundry occasions on their itinerary. Up to the moment when they nightly plunged into the darkness of an alley in Gray's Inn Road at nine o'clock and disappeared, she had their route mentally mapped out.

As she suspected, they were at this moment in the Strand opposite Charing Cross Station. It was getting dark; street lamps were lit. A grey muffler was now wrapped round Hector, so that a stub of chilly nose rested redly on its folds. The dog yawned occasionally with a gentle shiver, now sampling like a connoisseur the varied odours of the Strand, now dozing off into some golden canine paradise of Parnassan scents. The ancient minstrel still enthusiastically hurled at the ears of the careless millions a devastating blast of melody. Lady Babington descended from her limousine and approached the curious trio for the second time on that momentous day.

"I want to talk with you alone," she whispered to the old man. "Come down this side-street to the Embankment, where we'll have peace."

Looking back, she could discern a swift council of war. Then a cavalcade of three set out in her footsteps—Hector, followed by the dog, and in the rear-guard the old fiddler, to pick up stragglers, as it were, from their column.

Lady Babington dropped on a shadowed seat, and Hector, with his tin bowl still outstretched, brought the procession to halt in front of her. The blind man stood waiting hat in hand, uncertain, on the *qui vive*.

"What is your name?" she began.

"Neil McGraw, mem. But they call me Auld Neil."

"Have you got a wife, Old Neil?" she began, tenderly.

"Three o' them, mum. Deid thae mony years."

"But—but have you no one else?"

"There's Hector—an' Jock." The dog gave a quick bark as one who remarks: "That's me!" Old Neil prodded Jock with his boot. "Haud yer gab!" he growled.

"But who looks after you?" persisted Lady Babington. "Is there no woman in the house?"

"Aweel," ruminated the old man, "there's mebby Mistress O'Hagan doonstairs."

Lady Babington exhaled a sigh of relief. "In that case," she pursued, "what I've got to suggest won't sound so awful. Listen!"

Old Neil grasped his fiddle in an attitude of defence. Hector's cold little nose seemed to gleam over the ramparts of muffler like a searchlight. Jock, aware of excitement, jumped from chill haunches and waved an expectant tail.

"This is what I want," went on the richly smooth voice of Lady Babington. "I want to take little Hector away to my own home to live."

There was an uncertain pause.

In the darkness Hector fumbled for Old Neil's hand, and Old Neil, thus emboldened, cleared his throat. "Na, na," he said, deliberately. "Na, na."

"Wouldn't you like to come and live with

me, Hector? It's a beautiful house. I have no children, and you'll have nice food, nice clothes. You'll be a little gentleman and ride in a motor-car."

"Thank ye," said Hector, dryly, "but I'm biding wi' Auld Neil."

"But you," she cried, addressing the old fiddler, "surely *you* wouldn't stand in Hector's way? You see the chance it is for him? I want to make him my own son. He'll grow up a gentleman, rich, respected, with wealthy friends—you wouldn't be so selfish as to deny him all that?"

"But bide a wee, mum! Is there nothing else? There's nae catch in it somewhere?"

"Yes," said Lady Babington, slowly. "I've thought it all over, and there is something else. After Hector comes to me, you must promise never to seek him out. I want him to grow up a gentleman. You wouldn't stand in his light, Old Neil?"

"Ask the bairn himsel'," said the old man. "Ye heard all the lady said, Hector?"

"No' sae fast," demurred Hector. "Mebby I wouldna like to decide the nicht, mum. Me and Auld Neil dinna jump at things rash-like."

"Ay," cried Old Neil, "that's richt! Will it please ye, mum, if we gie the answer to-morrow?"

Old Neil produced an old belt and leathered him; and Hector bawled robustly.

Lady Babington frowned. It was clear they would not be moved.

"Very well," she said, at length. "Meet me here at seven o'clock to-morrow night, and I'll hear what your decision is. Good night!"

She crossed the road. They were alone. The river lappered on the hewn stones at their side; in the night wind the street lamps winked; and Old Neil and Hector faced each other.

"Guid sakes!" said Hector.

"Lawk a mussy!" said Old Neil.

"She's daft," said Hector, contemptuously.

"Na, na, she means it," said Old Neil, in hollow tones.

"A big hoose," pondered Hector. "Guid grub!"

Old Neil blew his nose. He tried to make it ring like a blast of scorn on all large houses and luxurious food and the opulence of motors. But the result was mournful and quavering. "Would ye leave me, Hector?" he ventured. "But there, look ye! We'll hae a crack about it the nicht. We'd best get movin' or we'll be late on the pitch."

And Hector led him back from the soft gloom of the riverside to the pallid blaze of the raucous Strand.

That night, the same instant as Lady Babington (with serene confidence in herself and her blandishments) was busy on the telephone engaging a nursemaid and a governess, Hector and Old Neil were stumbling up the darkly treacherous stairs that led to their home.

After supper, Old Neil lit a clay pipe with the seasoning of years in its brown sheen, and looked into the fire with eyes that could see most excellently. (His "BLIND" notice dangled on a convenient nail.) It was Hector's job to "clear away," and he performed it with the slickness of an expert, shuffling the dishes on a tray and with them diving downstairs. It was while mounting again that Hector realized the crisis which was impending. After supper Old Neil invariably took from its case a cherished violin and played—not this time for the callous public, but for himself alone.

To-night Old Neil was silent.

With knitted brows Hector regarded his protector.

"About your goin' to bide wi' this lady," began Old Neil. "Are ye no' happy enough wi' me, laddie?"

"Ou, ay," said Hector. His parental memories were so misty as to be negligible. With Old Neil, the fiddler, had been his only remembered home.

"You're no' thinkin' o' leavin'?"

"I was not," said Hector. "But I've thocht aboot it again—*and I'm goin'!*"

Old Neil jerked upright in his chair. His

mouth swung open with the slow motion of harbour gates. As he stared at Hector, his aspect was that of a flabbergasted hippopotamus trying to squint at an impertinent canary perched blithely on its ear.

"Wha-a-at? *You're goin'?* Laddie, are ye daft?"

A slow smile spread over Hector's face. Of a sudden he broke into the initial steps of the Highland Fling, and "hooched" like an intoxicated gillie.

"The laddie's mazed," gasped Old Neil, blankly. "He's gane wud!"

"I'm no' sae daft!" cried Hector, ceasing to pirouette. "Wouldna *you* go if ye had the chance?"

"And leave me—Auld Neil—what has looked after ye since ye were a bairn?"

"Ay," said Hector.

"I'll no' stand in yer way."

"No," said Hector.

"Yer mind's made up?"

"Ay," said Hector.

"Then ye're an ungratefu' young dog. It's a thrashin' for ye this nicht."

Old Neil produced an old belt and leathered him; and Hector bawled robustly.

"I'll no' stand in yer way," repeated Old Neil, "but if ye havena changed yer mind by the mornin', it's another thrashin' for ye."

And after breakfast, Hector, fired by the wonders of a project about which he remained dourly silent, took it like a man.

SEVEN-THIRTY was musically chiming in the hall of the Babingtons' house when Hector was led in. He was awe-struck for a moment. Mellow light gave the panelled hall a glow like the dim mysteries of a church. He half expected soft and flute-like music from a pipe-organ. Lady Babington led him across a carpet that felt as thick and spongy as a Highland bog, and they climbed the broad stairway.

"This," said Lady Babington, throwing open a door on the top landing, after a terrific bout of circular mountaineering towards a gorgeous stained-glass cupola in the roof, "is your nursery, my dear. Martha, this is Master Hector."

"Och, the darlint!" cried the waiting nursemaid in a rich Irish brogue, rushing joyously forward to her sturdy charge. "Yes'm," added Martha. "Master Hector'm."

Hector eyed her belligerently. He could see, with his practised young eye, that she was one of the kissing sort. And Hector objected to kissing. He determined to come to terms on the subject as soon as Lady Babington left the room.

As he suspected, when Lady Babington had hurriedly descended to dress for dinner, Martha pounced upon him.

"I thocht ye would try that on!" he cried, neatly side-stepping. "You womenfolk dae nothing but kiss. Hae ye got ony sweeties on ye?"

The beaming Martha produced some black peppermint balls, and held them behind her back while she lowered inviting lips.

Hector pondered on the subject of peppermint balls for a moment, then held out his hand.

"Kiss ahead," he muttered feebly, uplifting his face with the grave resignation of a martyr who endures in a good cause.

After a careful exploration of the house from basement to attic, he was undressed by Martha's quick fingers. Garbed in a dressing-gown of padded silk, his footsteps were guided to the bathroom on the landing below. Martha seated him on a cane-bottomed chair while his bath filled.

"Are ye goin' to dook me in that water?" he demanded, removing his peppermint from one cheek to another.

"Sure and it's her ladyship's orders, Master Hector. 'Bath every night at seven, Martha,' says she. In ye jump!"

"I'll gie ye another kiss," said Hector, "if I dinna need to go in."

Martha picked him up, stripped off the dressing-gown, and the next moment he was kicking and yelling in eighteen inches of warm water. Martha scrubbed. Then came a sudden change. Hector lay back quiescent. He wriggled his toes and drew deep breaths of contentment.

"This is gr-r-rand!" he ejaculated. "I didna think a bath could feel so guid. Hae ye any other things as guid as this in the hoose? Oo-oo, mon!"

And the soft hot towel with which he was dried was like the caress of an angel's wing. Hector was tucked into bed feeling like an emperor. The nursery fire sent darting shadows across the dim red glow on the ceiling. This was a great house—a wonderful house—a great adventure—the greatest adventure he had ever struck. And it seemed as if it would be successful. He looked up sleepily. Lady Babington bent over him. But he regarded her not. Contentment melted in all his bones. He felt a moistily warm touch on his mouth. "Gosh!" he muttered, feebly. "Thae women at it again!" And so he slept.

HE slept; but with a start he was awake again. Sleep? Sleep was not for him! It was his time for action!

His eyes closed, his head slipped forward. Then with a jerk he roused himself once more. He fixed his eyes determinedly on

the ceiling. He would keep awake—or, by thunder, he would allow anyone with impunity to stigmatize him as a mere flabby Englishman! The hours passed. Bedroom doors shut. On the stairs leading to their attics the maids' steps creaked. Midnight rumbled out from a church tower.

On the stroke of one Hector leapt nimbly out of bed. In the light from the embers he quickly dressed himself. And carrying his shoes in his hand, he opened the nursery door and stole down the long stairs with the practised tread of one who knows the true inwardness of silence.

He reached the ground floor, but did not pause. Down to the basement he moved slowly in the darkness, step by step; and without a tell-tale creak he opened a door. Gently he switched on the light. It was the larder.

He took a quick survey, and unfurled from his arm a pillow-case he carried.

Ten minutes later he crawled out of the pantry window and reached the garden wall. A glint of moonlight striking through dark clouds illuminated the row of gardens. Hector crept along the wall with a burden on his shoulder, and, sliding down to the roof of a shed, dropped into the darkness of the lane that terminated the row of back gardens. Without pausing he took to his heels, passed the stables, and emerged into the silent street. Not a cat stirred. His bundle glimmered whitely on his shoulder.

Hector had his route mentally planned with the minuteness of a brigade commander. He slipped along side-streets like a wraith, now and then on the brink of danger darting across the street into a doorway or alley, till at last, half an hour later, he plunged up a dark, dilapidated stair and knocked softly on a door at the top of the tenement. There was the rasp of a match, and the door swung back.

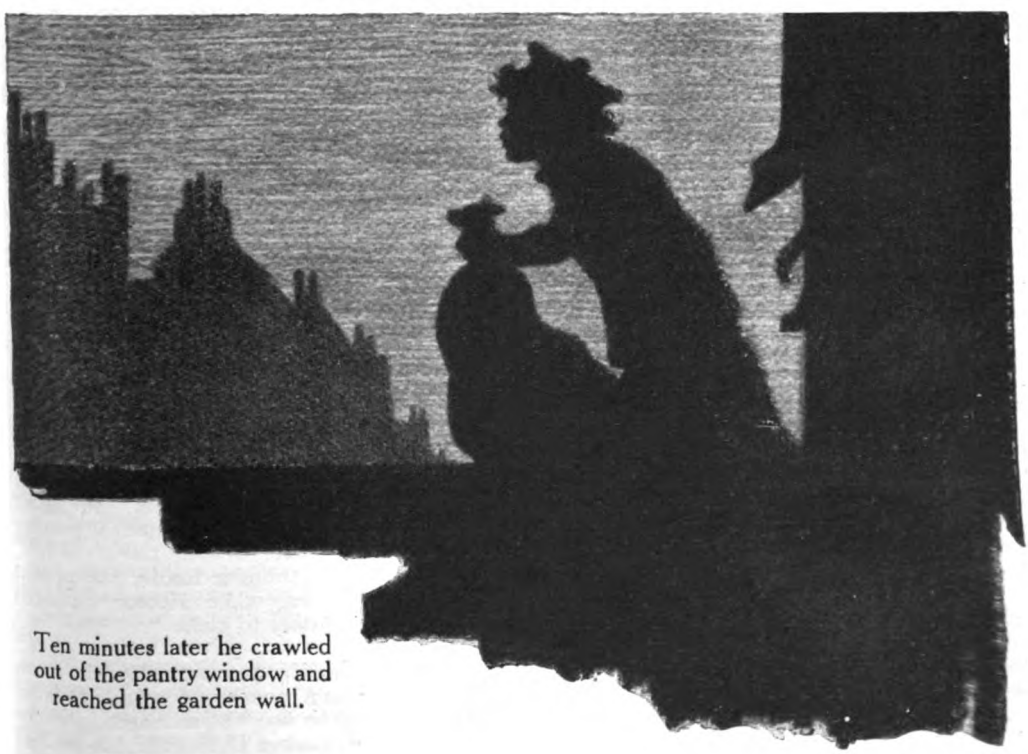
"Hech, laddie!" muttered a voice, hoarsely, and the voice was the voice of Old Neil. "Man, laddie! Hae ye come back already, then?"

Hector swung the pillow-case from his shoulder, and, with the air of a buccaneer, tipped from it a ham, sundry tinned tongues, a couple of loaves, tinned fruits of all descriptions—to say nothing of a quantity of butter, plus innumerable small paper packages he had hastily made up in the larder.

"I've brocht ye these, grandpaw," chirped Hector, proudly looking at the pile of provender as St. George would glance down at a decapitated dragon. "They're a present from her leddyship."

"A present?" gasped Old Neil. "For *me?* There's enough there to feed a man a fortnight. For *me?*"

"Ay."



Ten minutes later he crawled out of the pantry window and reached the garden wall.

"And what makes her send ye wi' them at this time o' night?"

"Oh, I was just passing, anyway," remarked Hector, with nonchalance.

Old Neil scratched his head dubiously.

"Ye'd better bide here the nicht, then."

"Na, na," said Hector, backing towards the door. "It's time I was awa' back."

"See here, ye birkie!" cried Old Neil. "I hae ma suspicions that thae vittels are stolen property. If they are"—he eyed the strap that hung by the fireplace—"it's the wheeps for you, ma mannie. What richt, tell me, had you to bring thae things here?"

"Every richt," announced Hector, throwing out his chest. "Am I no' the son o' the hoose? Did her leddyship no' gie me the run o' the place? I tell ye, she said, '*Tak' what ye like*, ma son!' I'll bring ye a bundle like this every week, ye see. And"—he produced half a crown from his sporran and laid it on the table—"that's for your baccy. They've taken a fancy to me—they'll gie me what I ask. It's a grand arrangement!"

Old Neil stood speechless for a moment.

"Ye thievin' young villain!" he burst out at length. "Ye've gane to live wi' thae people to thieve food for *me!* It's a thrashin' for you this nicht!"

Old Neil dived for the belt, but Hector's heels were thudding on the stairs.

"Guid nicht—I'll be back next week," floated up from the scurrying figure. Old Neil stood silent, a deep frown on his face. He closed the door carefully. The frown faded, changed to a wrinkled smile, and then, with a chuckle, Old Neil stooped and picked up a tin of peaches.

MEANWHILE Hector was making skilful and speedy return. In due course he scrambled on the shed and so attained the coping stone of the garden wall. He was about to set out on his creeping journey on the wall towards the larder window when he was brought up with a jerk. The dark form of a man had just slithered down to the ground inside the yard and was making in silence for the gap in the box hedge.

Hector watched, nonplussed. His nerve got as severe a shake as though a policeman had at that moment tapped him on the shoulder. He decided to discover as far as possible what was happening in the garden, and, crouching on the top of the wall, stole forward.

It was a clear moonlight night; and he came into full view of the house in time to see the man search for a moment in his pocket and unlock the back door. A gesture, the poise of the shoulders, he suddenly recognized. It was Rooke, the butler.

"Dang him!" grumbled Hector. "What richt has he to go oot at nights? It'll be a lassie he's courtin'—but ane o' thae nichts it's me he might catch. We'll be carefu' after this." And he crawled along the wall and into the pantry window with the stealth of a perambulating cat.

Past the butler's room and up the basement steps he fumbled, feeling his way in the darkness. The moonlight slanted down the main staircase, and Hector kept in the shadows close to the wall. On the first floor he paused, his heart in his throat. There was the sound of a muffled footstep. He looked round with a gasp, and was gripped by the collar of his jacket and almost swung off his feet.

"So it's you, sonny!"

He screwed round to his captor. Rooke smiled down at him.

"And wot's our little toddler doin' 'ere at this time of night, may I ask?" Rooke released Hector's collar and gripped his ear.

"Leggo, you brute!" gurgled Hector, and lashed out sturdily at Rooke's shins.

Rooke squirmed and clasped an injured ankle.

"You young 'ound, I'll 'orsewhip you! I'll tell the master and 'ave you kicked out of this 'ouse. You're a young guttersnipe, that's wot you are! Kicked out, you'll be!"

"Mebby ay," said Hector, regaining confidence, "and mebby no. Before ye tell them aboot me, tell them aboot yersel'."

"Wot d'yer mean?" demanded Rooke, in a hoarse whisper.

"Tell them what you were doing oot at this time o' nicht."

"Eh?" gasped Rooke. "'Ow do you know I was——"

"Saw you," said Hector. "And I'll hae nae more sauce frae you, ma mannie. Anither word, an' I'll waken Sir George and tell him what I saw."

"You young——"

"Master Hector frae you, please, my man!" snapped Hector, regarding Rooke imperiously in the moonlight. The butler scowled.

Hector cast about furiously in his mind for the phrase used by Sir George when dismissing Rooke from his presence, and with a swoop recalled it.

"That will do, thank you, Rooke!" remarked Hector, in throaty tones, looking the butler in the eye.

With a face of thunder Rooke turned and melted downstairs, while Hector mounted silently and sedately to bed.

SUCCESS breeds success. By the time Hector was a month under Lady Babington's roof he was the monarch of all he surveyed. Sir George Babington, his devoted

servant, spent his mornings on a back lawn playing cricket with him, and their combined score soon was: three plate-glass windows, two cucumber frames, Apollo's plaster nose, and one duck's egg (this last being the size of

"You young 'ound, I'll 'orsewhip you! I'll tell the master and have you kicked out of this 'ouse."

the lump they made on the head of the gardener next door).

If Hector sneezed, a specialist was hustled from Harley Street; if his eye flashed in momentary wrath the house rocked about him, and the maids in the basement put their aprons over their heads. His slightest whim was a royal edict. The one subject of his realm who would not bow down before him was Rooke. Rooke stalked past with compressed lip and averted eye. Hector knew; Rooke knew. The balance of uncomfortable knowledge was delicate: it would not stand a jar. Then came the climax.

It came in a strange way, and began with a strange happening.

HECTOR was puzzled. He had carefully pulled off his pillow-case, as usual, at the hour of one a.m., and was about to start out on his duty-call to the groaning shelves of Lady Babington's pantry, when he found that he had been locked in his bedroom.

It more than puzzled Hector. It worried him.

"I'll no' be beat," he said, screwing his forehead into furrows of shrewd deliberation. "I'll get to the bottom o' this locked door or ken the reason why."

He slipped into the bathroom, and placed a chair on the top of the linen cupboard. Then he recalled with a jolt that Sir George and Lady Babington were out at a ball, and would not be back till 4.30 or thereabouts. Had Lady Babington suspected his exploits and made certain that he would not carry out another raid in her absence? Or were there other strange things in the wind? Hector climbed upon the chair, swung open the fanlight over the door, and determined to find out at once.

The loose end of the rope operating the fanlight he threw into the passage, and slid down to the corridor carpet in silence.

To achieve the journey downstairs without accident or noise was simple to him: he had done it in darkness too often not to know where lay the loose boards. But to-night there was an added stimulus towards caution, and Hector ventured step by step, ready every moment for the unexpected.

"Ah!"

He choked back a gasp and crouched into the wall. He had reached the first floor; and at the far end of the wide corridor there was the whitely gleaming outline of a large window. And standing out black against the faint light was the motionless figure of a man.

He was close to Hector—barely ten yards away. The tick of the clock downstairs in the hall was the only sound through all that silent house. Hector held his breath, fearful lest he should give away his presence.

The dark silhouette of the man turned from the window and approached on tip-toe, bending his body forward with each step in his effort to maintain the silence; Hector saw that it was Rooke.

The butler passed him three feet away like a ghost, and disappeared into the darkness of the corridor. Then there was a sudden slit of light, and Hector saw Sir George's study door open, and the figures of men inside. A light moved jerkily: it clearly came from an electric torch.

What were they doing? What was the scheme—at this hour?

Hector pondered. There seemed only one solution—burglars.

Greatly daring, Hector tip-toed forward, anxious to see what exactly was afoot. It was his eagerness that brought his journey to an abrupt and terrifying stop. He accidentally nudged a small table, and a vase toppled to the floor with a crisply ringing smash of priceless china.

Hector stepped back, shuddering in the darkness. The light in the room ahead went instantly out. There were muffled exclamations. And the voice of Rooke hissed: "Behind this chair with the tools—and into this room. It's probably a maid; she won't look in here."

THERE were shuffling noises, then silence. Hector stood still, trying to quieten the throbbing in his chest. Clearly, the men—how many there were he did not know—had slipped into the disused strong-room that led out of the study. In this dark retreat Sir George occasionally dabbled with photographic chemicals. The vision of the oak door that hid the steel sheet stood clearly in front of Hector's eyes. And with a rush came the memory that the key was kept on the outside of that door.

It needed but a quick dash and the affair was over—the burglars trapped in a cage from which there was no escaping. They might, of course, be out in the study again before he got there—before he could turn the key. (It was so easy to slip back along the corridor and up to the safety of bed. . . .) He decided swiftly. Summoning his strength Hector tip-toed forward, entered the study, clicked on the lights, and plunged for the oak door that stood closed in the far corner. As he threw himself against it and gripped the key, there was a muffled cry within the strong-room, and a shoulder thudded on the steel door. The lock rasped home—in time, but no more. Hector mopped a damp brow with his sleeve. Behind a chair was a little pile of strange tools. And there was a hole an inch deep in the lock of the safe beside Sir George's desk. Hector exhaled deeply. Then he descended to the hall, lifted the telephone receiver from the rest, and waited.

In that swift moment of waiting, the whole of Hector's life swam before him. Rooke would be arrested as an accomplice of the burglars. Was it likely that Rooke would keep his mouth shut on his knowledge of Hector's midnight perambulations? No! And the strange weekly disappearance of certain foods from the larder would be fixed on him in an instant. And his life here would be ended. Ended.

There was only one solution. That was to release the men upstairs. Should he hang up the receiver? Hector's brain whirled.

"Number, please?" said the exchange.

"Nearest police-station," gulped Hector.

BY the time the police arrived at the house of Sir George and Lady Babington, a little figure was clambering down the back garden wall for the last time. On his back were two enormous fat bolsters stuffed to the top with choice viands from the larder.

"What a night!" said Sir George, shivering slightly as he drank the coffee Lady Babington poured from the percolator. "What a night!" The morning-room clock struck four. "We'd just be leaving Beckwater's now, and the thieves would have got clean away, if the police hadn't been warned."

"What I want to know," said Lady Babington, handing her husband the sandwiches, "is, who warned the police?"

"They said the voice sounded thin—like a woman's. One of the maids, probably."

"But all the maids were asleep. They knew nothing about it till afterwards. I wonder they didn't waken little Hector with their fright and chattering." Lady Babington looked appealingly at the baronet, who was reaching out for another sandwich. "Just run upstairs, George, and see if the little chap is all right."

"If he's awake," Sir George called back, "I'll fish him down for some coffee and sandwiches."

Sir George was weary; he had had a tiring day and a nerve-twanging night; he climbed the stairs laboriously. But he descended them like a landslide.

"Gone!" he gasped. "Clean gone, my dear! And room door locked on the outside. He must have shinned out of the fanlight. Gone, I tell you!"

A-quiver, Lady Babington brushed past him; she swept upstairs into Hector's bedroom like a tornado, and dissolved into shuddering sobs on the vacant pillow.

"Keep calm, my dear," soothed Sir George. "Come downstairs. We must get in touch with the police again at once. Don't understand it at all. Rooke, the scoundrel, said he had a statement to make later on about Hector. Wish I had got it before he was taken to the police-station."

"Rooke?" sobbed Lady Babington. "What had Rooke to say about my Hector?"

"Told us why the youngster's gone, perhaps."

"But why?" burst out Sir George. "In the name of goodness—*why?*"

"For Auld Neil. He's gettin' frail for fiddlin' and the streets—and—and so I pinched food for him at nights. I was going awa' for good an' all to-night—but I—I just had to come back and tell ye." Hector moved sadly to the door. "Guid-bye, mem. Guid-bye, sir. It's been grand here——"

"Don't, don't go!" cried Lady Babington. "Don't——"

"Quiet, my dear," interrupted Sir George. "Leave him to me. Hector, was it you who warned the police? Answer me."

"Ay."

"You locked these burglars in the strong-room all by yourself and 'phoned the police-station?"

"Ay."

"Oh, my darling!" cried Lady Babington, rushing forward with outstretched arms.

"But where—where can he be? Oh, do come down and 'phone the police now, George."

AT the foot of the stairs Sir George stopped. The morning-room door was open. He gripped his wife's arm and pointed. On the hearthrug stood a small, pale figure. It was Hector. At his feet were two fat bolsters.

"Oh, my darling!" cried Lady Babington, rushing forward with outstretched arms.

"Na, na! Stand back!" said Hector, in a clear, calm voice. "Ye'll no' want to have me here any mair when I tell ye the truth. See this?" He indicated the bulging bolsters.

Her hands clasped in anxiety, Lady Babington dropped on the edge of a chair.

"I was thievin' these," continued Hector. "They're full o' meat and things frae your pantry."

Sir George leapt forward and seized Hector's hand.

"Then, by thunder, you deserve all the tinned tongue you've ever collared! We'll send a barrowful of tinned tongue round to old Whiskers in the morning, won't we, Eva?"

"Truck loads of it!" cried Lady Babington, as she swooped down on the open-mouthed figure by the doorway.

"Ye—ye mean I've to stay on?" gasped Hector. "Me—who thieved your food at nights?"

"Of course, my darling! Of course!" Lady Babington fondled him with flute-like maternal cooings. "What does the old food matter?"

"Then I'll hae a sandwich," said Hector, reaching. "And gimme a drink of your coffee, dad."

WAXWORKS

A MYSTERY

by

W. L. GEORGE

ILLUSTRATED BY E. G. OAKDALE

HENRY BADGER rapidly paced the City churchyard; his air of anxiety seemed to overweigh his small, though not unpleasing, features. He was an insignificant little man, dressed in pepper-and-salt tweeds. His hair was cut very close, except where a love-lock, plastered down with jasmine-oil, trailed over his forehead from under his hard black hat. Whenever he completed the circuit of the churchyard he peered towards the gate through which must come disturbance and romance. Henry Badger was in love, and he could not escape the consequences of his share in our common delight and affliction.

Suddenly brightness overspread his sharp features. It was she! She, in a pink crêpe-de-Chine blouse, disconnected rather than connected with her white serge skirt by a patent-leather belt. Above the pink blouse was an equally pink neck, and a rather pretty face, all soft curves. She was bright blue of eye and tumbled in pleasant fairness about the hair, under a large straw hat from which drooped on one side a fragment of ivy that might with advantage have been placed elsewhere. But her name was Ivy, and she liked to live in harmony.

"I'm late," she said, with pretty briskness, as they shook hands. "So sorry, Henry. Only the boss got dictating, and he likes to hear himself talk, even if it is only to little me. Still, better late than never," she added, with a smile indicating wit.

Henry Badger replied "Yes," and wondered if it would be good policy to attack her for being late. Since he felt at fault, no doubt it would. Only—an argument with Ivy, one never knew what that would lead to.

"Well, you dummy," she said, "is that all you've got to say? Got the tickets?"

"Er——," said Henry Badger, "no."

"What do you mean?" said Ivy, crossly.

"What I say," replied Henry Badger, with feeble determination. "Fact is, Ivy, I'm sorry, but I forgot."

The blue eyes stared at him, incredulous. "Forgot! What you been and done that for?"

Henry Badger explained profusely. The night before he'd had an awful headache, and it had slipped his memory to go round to the Imperial Music Hall, and this morning the manager——

Ivy trampled upon these confused excuses. "All I can see," she said, "is here we are landed on a Saturday afternoon with nowhere to go except the pictures. And it's so hot in those places. Last time I was fair melted. I do think it's too bad of you."

It was then that Henry Badger expressed himself. "Fact is, Ivy, I been thinking."

"Hope you didn't break anything," said Ivy, "but since you done it, what's the ideer?"

"I been thinking that we don't know the town we live in. I was reading a book the other day. 'Strange Sights of London,' it was called. And, would you believe it, Ivy? there's lots of things I got to learn."

"Ah, I do believe it," said Ivy.

"For instance," said Henry, "did you know that the church of St. Ethelburga wasn't burnt down in the Fire of London?"

"No," said Ivy, "and now I do know it I don't seem to be much better off."

"Ah!" said Henry, "that's where you're wrong, Ivy. It improves your mind to know that sort of thing. And that's how I got my ideer. I been thinking we might go round to the docks."

"What for?"

"Oh, I dunno. Just to mooch round. Ever been to the docks? No? Well, why not try 'em? You know, Ivy, people spend a lot of money going to the Riviera, and they never see the place round the corner. See your own country first," he added, with originality.

"Well," said Ivy, after a moment, "seeing you've mucked up this afternoon, and mother's gone out and there won't be any tea, I suppose we may as well."

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THE two little people, for neither of them was quite five-foot-six, made their way along the East India Dock Road, where an omnibus had deposited them. For an hour they wandered the tragic land where none live for pleasure, and where slowly the soot falls to obliterate sooty footmarks. They were too tired to be pleased when, behind a long brick wall, they found the docks. They perceived the smell of the East, oil of macassar, piled logs of sandal wood, barrels of copra; at a point against the sky, where now the dark clouds were racing, they saw outlined tall spars, while a funnel striped in yellow and blue threw out a shower of sparks against the sky like a dun veil touched with tinsel. The heat seemed to grow.

They lost their direction, not liking to ask their way of the rough inhabitants, not knowing where they wanted to go. They were astray, unprotected lambs in a land of slender law. Ivy began to drag her feet as loudly as she could, to show that she was displeased. Both were secretly oppressed because that day they had not kissed.

At that moment came rain. Very slowly at first in separate warm drops that made upon the pavement spots as large as a coin. "*My!*" said Henry, "it's going to come down like billy-oh!"

"Here we are," said Ivy, "landed on a Saturday afternoon with nowhere to go except the pictures."

"I don't care," said Ivy.

"Come on," said Henry, "let's see if we can get under shelter somewhere." But they were still progressing along another brick wall; opposite, the warehouses were closed. They ran, for now the rain was beginning to fall with greater determination.

"Here," gasped Henry, as he ran, "we must get in somewhere; you'll be sopped through. Let's go into a shop."

They stopped irresolutely at the corner of a side-street. As it was almost entirely occupied by warehouses no living creature could be seen. But just as they prepared to run on through the rain, Henry observed a tottering post, bearing a battered sign. The sign was in the shape of a hand pointing up the lane, and upon it were painted the words: "To the Waxworks."

"Here," he cried, dragging Ivy along, "that'll do. I didn't know they had waxworks in this part of the world, but it'll save us getting wet." They ran up the street, expecting a veranda and a commissionaire. At the end of the lane they had found nothing, and paused irresolute, when upon the door of a three-floored house Ivy saw the word "Waxworks," with the addition: "Mrs. Groby, Proprietress." Henry seized the door handle, which

resisted for a moment. The door jammed, but with a great effort he forced it open. It made a great clatter as he flung it against the wall. Breathless, and wiping their wet faces, the two stood giggling in the hall. Then, feeling alone, suddenly they kissed. The excitement of the run and of the caress sheltered them against an impression which the place imposed upon them only by degrees. They were in the hall of a house, of a house like any other house. There was no noise, except for a slight sound. It felt deserted. The door handle on the right was covered with dust. Nobody had gone into that room for a long time. An unaccountable emotion developed in them. The house was still except that at last they identified the slight sound: far away a tap was leaking. They found themselves listening to the drip which came regularly from the basement.

"Well," said Henry, with forced cheerfulness, "here we are." And as if to reassure himself: "Anyhow, we sha'n't get wet."

They stood for a moment looking out at the rain, which now came faster. The effect of this falling water, soft and hot, the dusty silence of the place except for that regular drip far away, combined to cast upon them a sort of uneasiness, an almost physical oppression. Ivy began to look about her with unexplainable anxiety. The darkness of the stairs, the banisters broken in several places, the dusty door handle, stirred in her a vague fear; she looked about her like a cat in a strange place and preparing to flee. As the feeling communicated itself to Henry his manliness revolted. It would be too silly to have the jumps. So he said: "Ive, since we're here, why not go upstairs and see the show?"

After a moment's hesitation, Ivy dominated her disturbance and said: "All right."

THEY went up the stairs, firmly, but with instinctive slowness, troubled by the sound of their feet upon the boards, followed by the fainter drip of the distant tap. The first floor was like the ground floor. Here, too, the door handles were dusty, and here, too, there came no sound from beyond the doors. They had to make an effort to go up further. The sense that here was emptiness made emptiness frightful. But Henry was leading and still went up. He didn't know why, but knew he must go up. Perhaps because he was a man and couldn't run away from anything, not even from nothing. The second floor comforted them, for here was a pay-box, empty it is true, but marked: "Pay here." Henry released a great sigh. It really was a show. It had a human air.

"Come on, Ivy," he said, in a loud voice which rang unpleasantly down the uncarpeted stairs. "Since there's nobody down here we can pay when we get to the top."

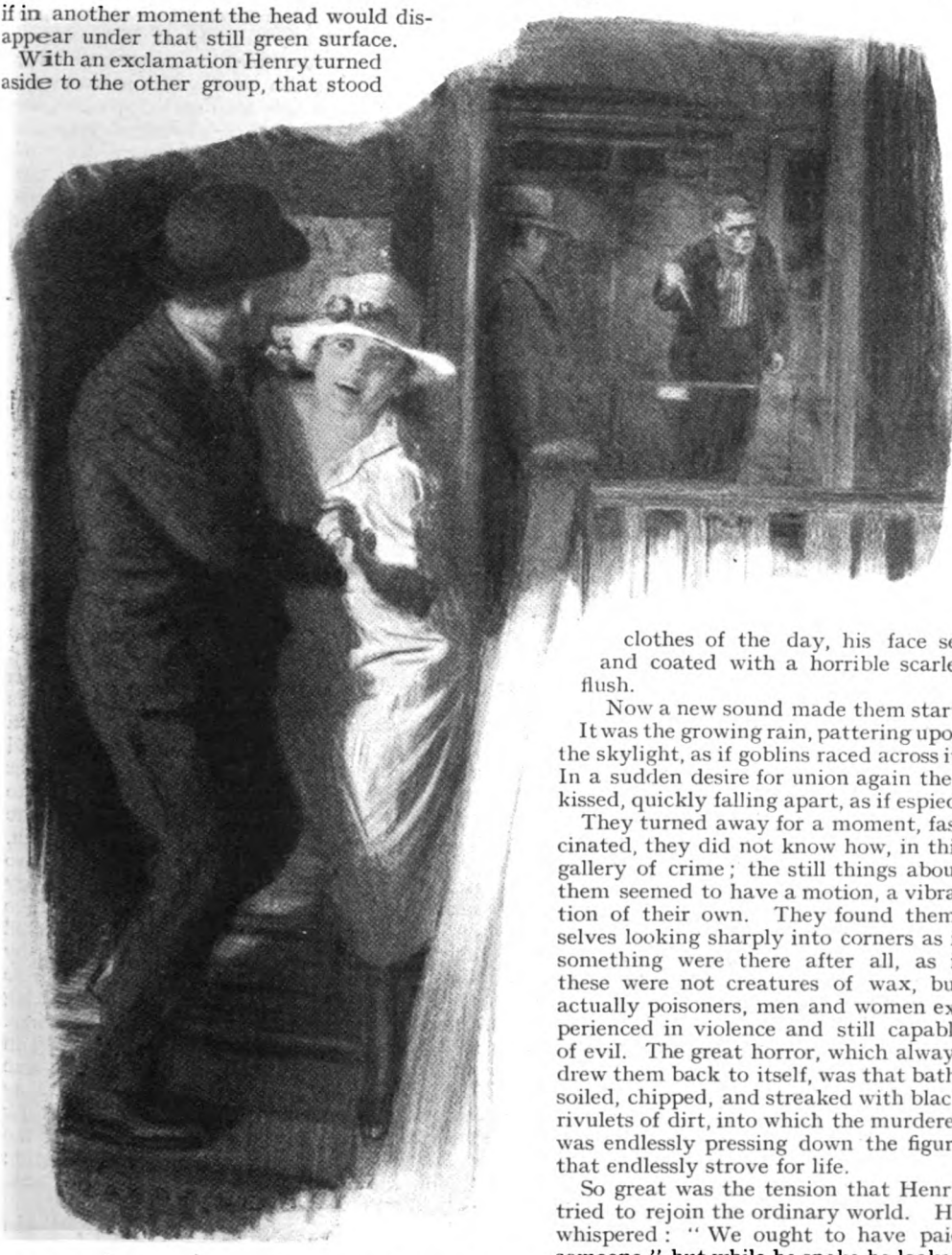
Ivy silently followed him up, and so they reached what seemed to be a large attic. Once again a reluctant door yielded to their hands, and Henry stepped into the doorway with a sort of jauntiness, but Ivy paused for a moment at his back. Waxworks, yes, but, she didn't know why, at once she was terrified. One couldn't see very well in the attic, for the dust of years lay upon the skylight, and the avaricious light of the sullen sky hardly penetrated. The walls had been whitewashed, but now were stained black with damp, soiled by the touch of hands, the smoke of lamps. About the door hung rags of dirty red damask. And in the immense silence of the place, hearing not even the drip of the distant tap, they found themselves alone with the wax figures.

Some stood upon little thrones of red-painted wood, here a man in day clothes, staring emptily from a yellow countenance, here a woman spreading crimson nostrils to an absent scent. The two were still in the doorway, not knowing why they did not go in. They were conscious of a secret vileness in these faces. The things stood so still, but sure of themselves, as if they had always stood in the dust and twilight. But at last Henry seized Ivy's arm more firmly and they went in.

Altogether there were fourteen figures. Three of the men were labelled Charles Peace, Dr. Crippen, and Gouffé. The woman with the intense gaze was Mrs. Maybrick, and there were two other women, one with bright red hair over which a spider had built its web. But Henry and Ivy, as they stood before them, did not at once read the legends telling how Crippen had killed his wife and burnt her body in the furnace, nor did they gaze at Gouffé, the bailiff, who had been carved into pieces and packed in a trunk. A little later Ivy read that ticket to the end and shudderingly stepped away from the invitation to draw apart the figure's clothing and see indicated the lines along which the body had been cut up. At that moment she was cowering against Henry, who instinctively had laid an arm about her shoulders, for the single figures were less terrifying than two groups represented in action. One of the groups comprised a man and a woman in a pink flannelette dressing-gown. With an expression of pinched determination the murderer was forcing the female figure down into a bath, where a sheet of mica, tinted green, represented water. In the grasp of a bony hand, the female figure held the edge of the bath, wildly raising the other arm, while into her distorted mouth floated the green edge of the water that was to drown her. It was a work of art of indescribable horror. It was as if the snake-like fingers moved, as

if in another moment the head would disappear under that still green surface.

With an exclamation Henry turned aside to the other group, that stood



He caught her just as she was going to throw herself down the stairs.

dim within the shadow, away from the faint rays that fell through the skylight. This represented a very old woman, lying on her face, her white hair scattered and stained with blood, while kneeling over her, a sandbag still half-raised, was a short man in the clothes of the day, his face set and coated with a horrible scarlet flush.

Now a new sound made them start. It was the growing rain, pattering upon the skylight, as if goblins raced across it. In a sudden desire for union again they kissed, quickly falling apart, as if espied.

They turned away for a moment, fascinated, they did not know how, in this gallery of crime; the still things about them seemed to have a motion, a vibration of their own. They found themselves looking sharply into corners as if something were there after all, as if these were not creatures of wax, but actually poisoners, men and women experienced in violence and still capable of evil. The great horror, which always drew them back to itself, was that bath, soiled, chipped, and streaked with black rivulets of dirt, into which the murderer was endlessly pressing down the figure that endlessly strove for life.

So great was the tension that Henry tried to rejoin the ordinary world. He whispered: "We ought to have paid someone," but while he spoke he looked from side to side, as if begging some material custodian to appear with a familiar ticket and a sounding punch. Ivy did not reply; she was holding his arm in a nervous clutch; once or twice she moved away from him, and then came back, as if her fingers grasped him independently of the processes of her brain. She was opening and closing her mouth, striving to speak

and finding her tongue dry. Only at last did she find a whisper: "I don't like it. Let's go."

Henry Badger also wanted to go, but he was so unaccountably afraid that he dared not go. His virility spoke: it told him that if he went now he would be everlastingly ashamed. He was afraid to tell himself that he was afraid. So, in a voice the loudness of which half-startled him, he replied: "Oh, rot! Since we've come up we may as well see the lot of them." So, Ivy still grasping his arm, they circled the attic, stopping in turn before each figure. Ivy did not want to see, but she could not look away. It was as if she must meet material, human eyes. It was always the eyes she looked at. There was a challenge in them. It was the defiance of the dead which she must meet. She must again view the bath, look down through the green surface of the water upon the agonized limbs which twisted in the dimness that was to be their grave. But now there was a change. Perhaps because habit made that first seem less awful, the second group gained in horror. It was not only the sight of the blood coagulated on the white hair, it was something else, something unnamable. The art of the sculptor had gone too far; here was mere and abominable reality. Real hair, and crouching above, with drooping eyelids, the figure of the murderer, ill-shaven and flushed with health. Something twisted in Ivy's body as she thought that upon the still mask she could discern beads of sweat. They stayed staring, half-conscious that they had been here a long time, though little more than a minute had passed. The beating of their hearts deafened them, and combined with the hissing sound of the rain, as if thin ghosts shod in cloud were racing across the skylight. Her eyes still fixed upon the creature with the sandbag, Ivy whispered again: "Let's go."

THEN, in the far distance, they heard the front door slam.

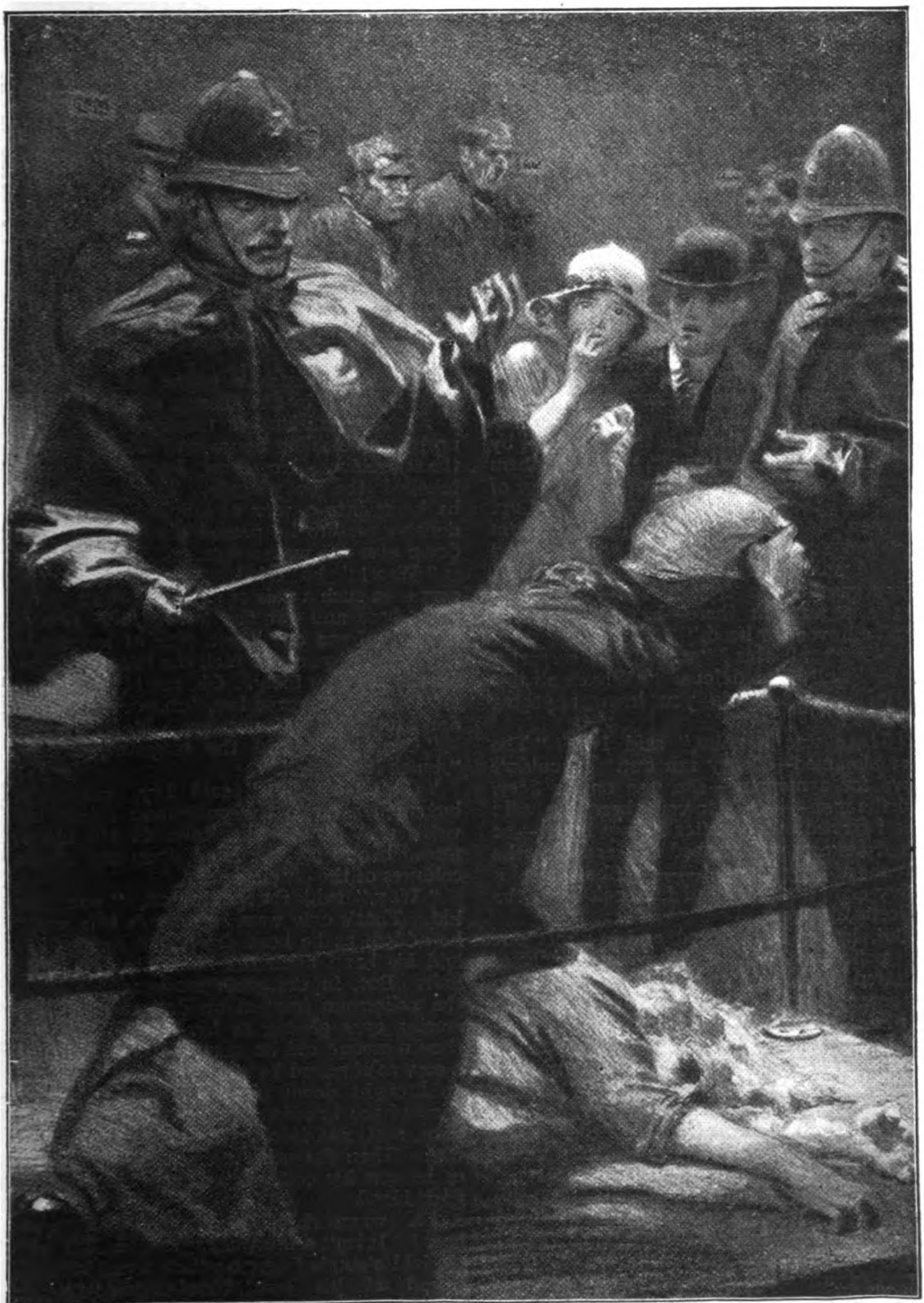
At that sound a confused terror seized them both. The contrast between incoming humanity and the unearthly silence here affected them like a blow. Heat and weakness rushed up their limbs, and in Ivy's ears was a sound like the distant unwinding of an endless chain. Henry was the first to recover; a compound emotion formed in him: the proprietress—of course—he wanted to get out—they really ought to pay—he'd better see. This summarized itself in an inarticulate sound. Turning, he ran to the landing and looked down the stairs. He did not know what he expected to see, but something, and after a few seconds, as he heard nothing, such a weakness overcame him that he let himself go against the balustrade, his head hanging down over the well of the stairs, where all was silence and darkness.

But almost at once he recovered, for suddenly behind him there came a long cry, a cry with a strange, torn quality, like that of a beast in pain, that jerked him to his feet as it dragged from his pores a sheet of cold sweat. As he turned, Ivy came tumbling out of the attic, her arms outstretched before her as if she fumbled for her way. She could not see, for her eyes were so retroverted that only the whites showed under the falling lids. He caught her just as she was going to throw herself down the stairs. As he touched her she flung her arms about his neck with maniacal strength and he could not free himself from that grasp. As they stumbled together down the stairs, he thought that it was like being held by bones. They fell together at the foot of the second landing, somehow struggled to their feet. There was a moment of incredible effort before they could pull open the outer door, which had been closed by the wind. They halted for an instant upon the steps, close-locked under the falling hot rain, and Henry did not understand what drove him then, what strange relief or exaltation, what insane excitement made him press his mouth to the lips drawn tightly into pallid lines. At the kiss Ivy's nerves suddenly relaxed. She became a bundle in his arms, something he dragged along, staggering as he fled, he knew not from what. They shared but one idea: to get away. The pavement streamed before them as they ran with downcast eyes. Then, with a shock, they were stopped by two policemen in oilskins, with whom they nearly collided at the junction of the lane and the main road. The policemen stared at these two, instinctively holding them by the arm, not understanding that they were at the limit of terror, and already suspecting that they had committed some crime. Indeed, Henry and Ivy were struggling in their grasp, still dominated by their one desire: to get away. At last, when they grew quiet and stood breathing hard, their mouths relaxed by nervous exhaustion, the elder policeman, who was a sergeant, said: "Now then, what's all this?"

"I don't know," said Henry.

"Come on," said the sergeant, "you don't put me off like that. What you been up to, you two?" Henry did not reply. "Mark you, it'll be all the worse for you if you don't talk. What's happened?" He shook his prisoner, suggesting that he'd make him talk yet, but failing to draw a reply he turned to the girl: "You, why were you running?"

Ivy seemed to have recovered more quickly than her companion. Though her



"You silly kid," said the policeman, "that's only wax. And so's this wax," he added, as he laid his hand upon the blood-stained white hair. Then he jumped up and recoiled, his staring eyes glaring at his hand.

eyelids did not cease to twitch, she managed to say: "I saw something."

"Saw something?" said the sergeant. "Saw what?"

"Oh, I couldn't," said Ivy.

"I expect they're drunk," said the constable.

"No," said the sergeant, meditatively, "I can't smell it on 'em."

"Oh, no," cried Ivy, "no, of course not, only it's the waxworks—the waxworks."

"Waxworks?" said the sergeant. "What waxworks?"

"I know, sergeant," said the constable, nodding up the lane. "Mrs. Groby's place."

"Oh, yes," said the sergeant, "I know now. Sort of chamber of 'orrors. Well, you been to the waxworks. What about it?"

"I saw something," whispered Ivy.

"Saw what?" said the constable. "Saw Mrs. Groby, I suppose. Funny old dame, sergeant. She's been living in that house all by herself for the last forty years, alone with them things. Used to make a lot of money out of them, and they say she's got a lot saved up. Between you and me and the lamp-post I'm surprised no one's knocked her on the head yet and walked off with her money."

Ivy gave a low cry: "Yes—that's it—there's a man in there—he's killed her—blood all over her head."

"What's all this?" asked the sergeant, professionally incredulous. "What's all this story? And how do you know anything about it?"

"There was a noise," said Ivy. "The door slammed—Henry ran out. I couldn't move for a moment—she was on the floor, and the man——" Her voice became shrill: "as I turned to look after Henry I just—he raised his arm and rubbed it—just with the corner of my eye—I——" She gave a heavy sigh, and her head fell back upon the policeman's chest.

But she had not fainted, and in a moment the policemen were striding up the lane, followed by Henry and Ivy, who clung to the companionship of these tall, loud-speaking men. As they went the sergeant theorized:—

"I see the dodge. He did the old woman in; then he heard this pair come up the stairs, and rigged himself up as a wax figure. Got cramp, I suppose, and took the chance to rub his arm when he thought she wasn't looking. Cheer up, missy," he added to Ivy, who was crying out of weakness. "We'll soon get him." As they reached the door of the museum he winked at her and drew his truncheon. "Better stay downstairs, missy," he added, as he led the way up. But after a moment Ivy and Henry could not bear their loneliness, and tip-toed up the stairs behind the blue shapes that walked with such assurance, making no attempt to muffle their tread. When they reached the attic, the policeman looked in a puzzled way into the twilight.

"Which one is it?" said the policeman, and instinctively his voice fell to a whisper. Ivy, who was just behind him, pointed at the kneeling shape carrying the sand-bag.

"That one," she said. The sergeant did not understand his own feeling, but he received some dim impression from the grey place. He walked only three feet into the room. Then, in an uneasy voice, he addressed the kneeling figure: "Now then, my man. The game's up. You better go quietly."

There was no reply, and the echoes died away, repeating a quivering uncertainty in the policeman's voice.

AFTER a moment's pause the sergeant, irritated by the silence, strode into the room; raising his truncheon, he went up to the kneeling figure and touched it on the shoulder. He drew back his hand, touched the body again. Then, suddenly, he burst into a roar of laughter, as with a derisive gesture he passed his hand up and down over the waxen face.

"Wax!" he cried. "Bert! have you ever seen such a pair of gabies as these two? Been here and got the 'orrors, the two of them, and ran out like a pair of loonies to tell us this dummy is Jack the Ripper posing for the Russian bally. Oh, my!"

"Wax!" whispered Ivy, "oh, no. Oh, please don't touch it. It's not wax. No, it's not."

"Come on," said the sergeant, kindly, "touch it yourself."

"Oh, I couldn't," said Ivy, quivering, but with a laugh the policeman seized her wrist, and, drawing her towards the figure, forced her to lay her hand upon the waxen coldness of the cheek.

"Wax," said the policeman, "you silly kid. That's only wax. And so's this wax," he added, as he bent down and negligently laid his hand upon the blood-stained white hair. But, in the same movement almost, the policeman jumped up and recoiled, his staring eyes glaring at his hand. For less than a second did he gaze at it; then, with a cry, as if seized by ungovernable hysteria, he brought down his truncheon upon the head of the kneeling man, which, under the blow, scattered into tiny fragments of tinted wax. Then the other policeman drew back as he saw his comrade's hand stained with fresh blood.

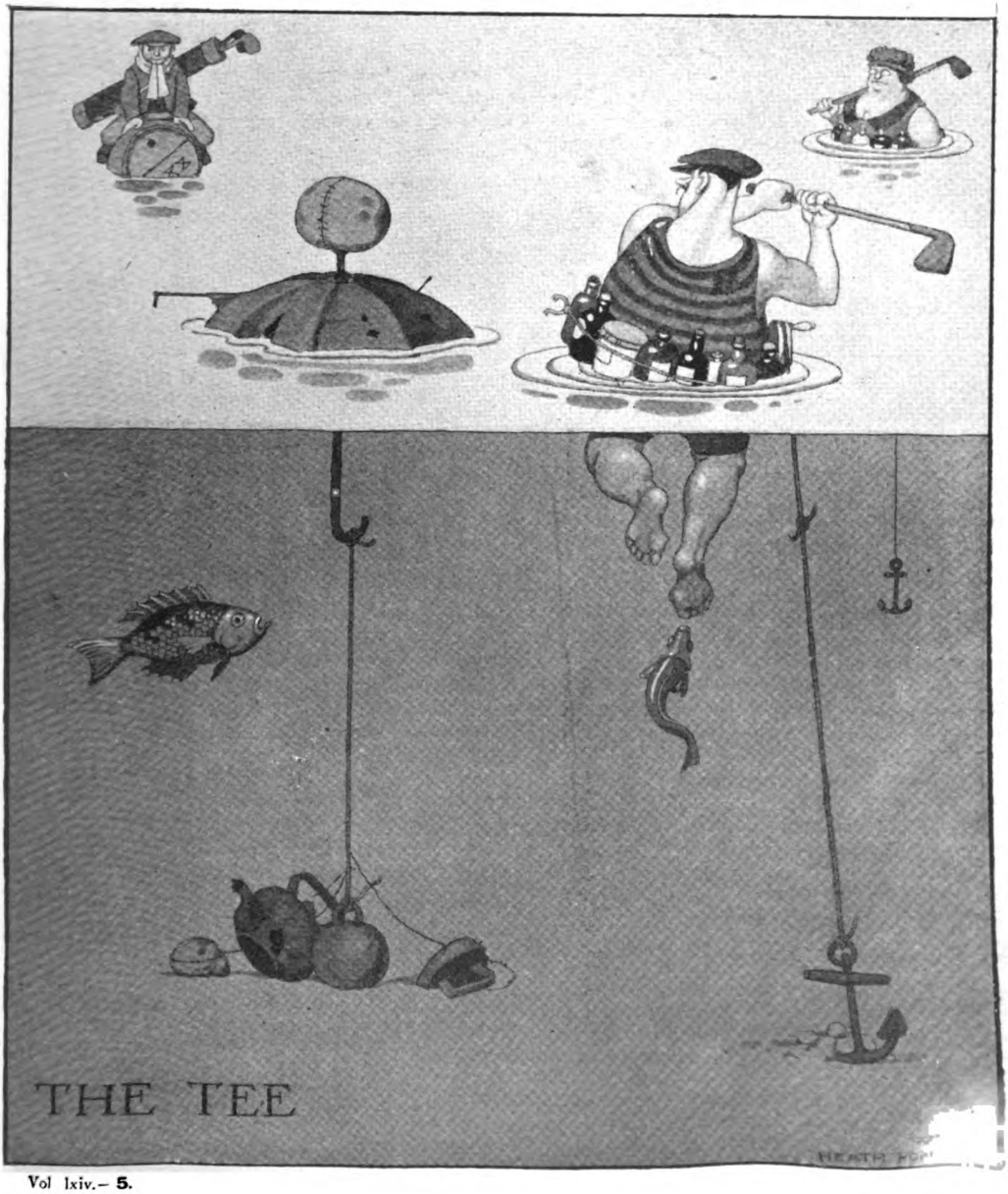
"A waxwork," he gasped. "What—how? It isn't a waxwork. It's Mrs. Groby." He laid a single finger on the woman's head, stared at his own blood-stained hand. "Dead—still warm." His voice rose high: "Killed—by what?"

In the silence, far below, could be heard the thin drip of the leaky tap.

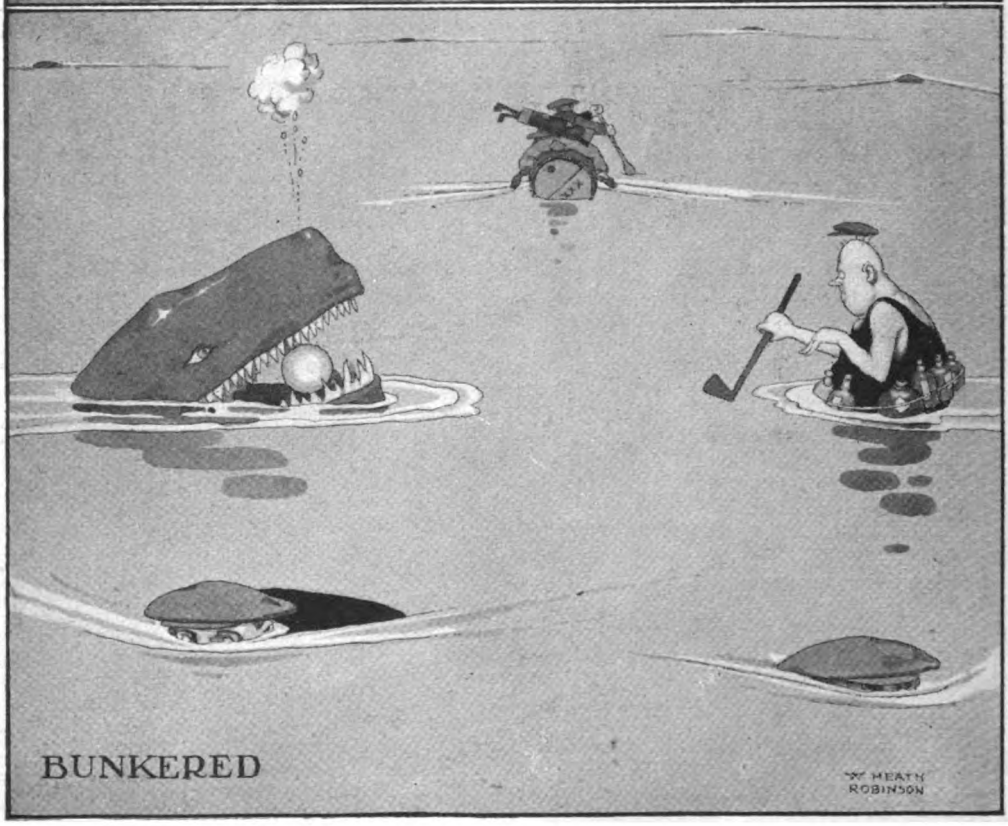
Aquatic Golf

By

W. HEATH ROBINSON



A COMMON
MISTAKE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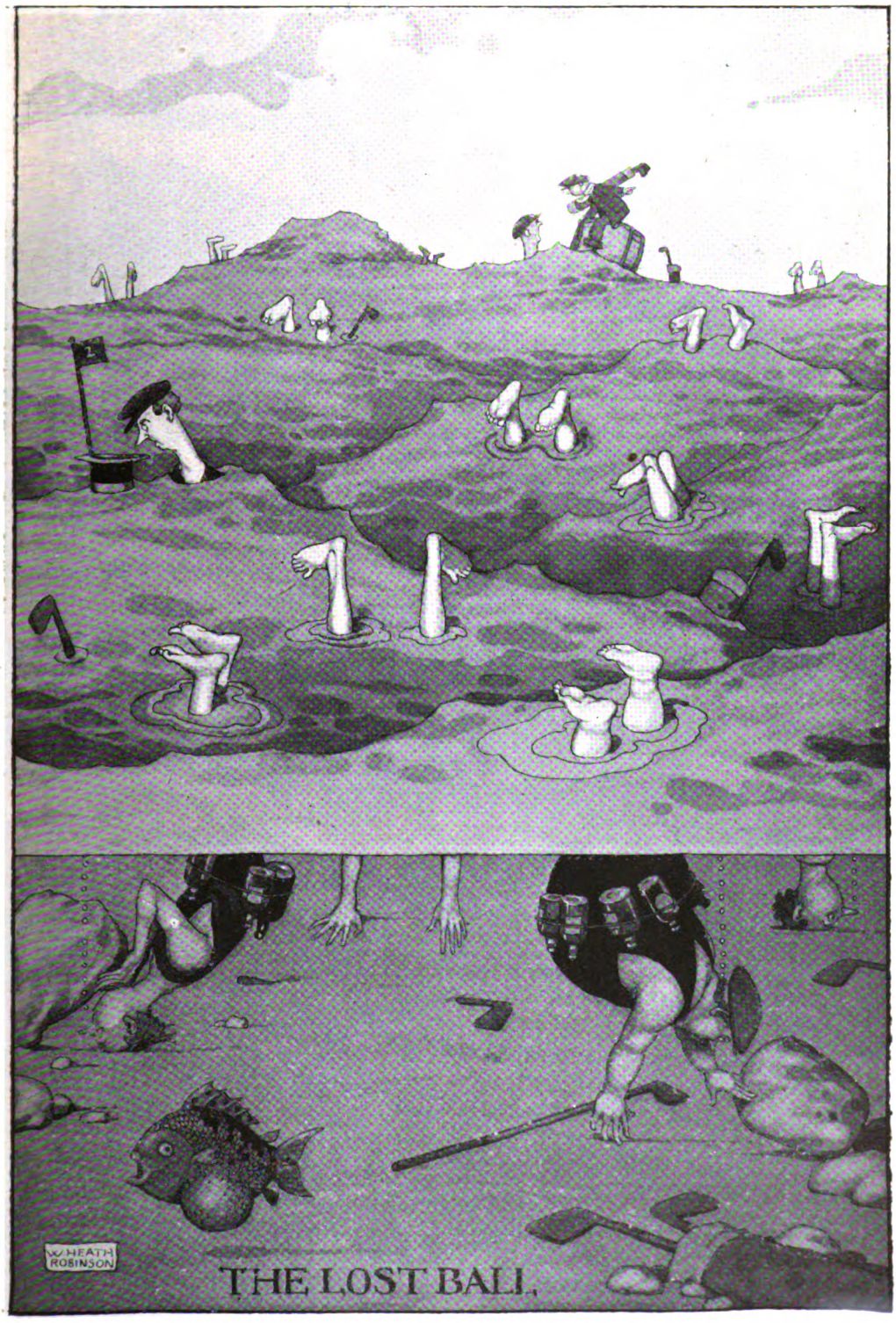
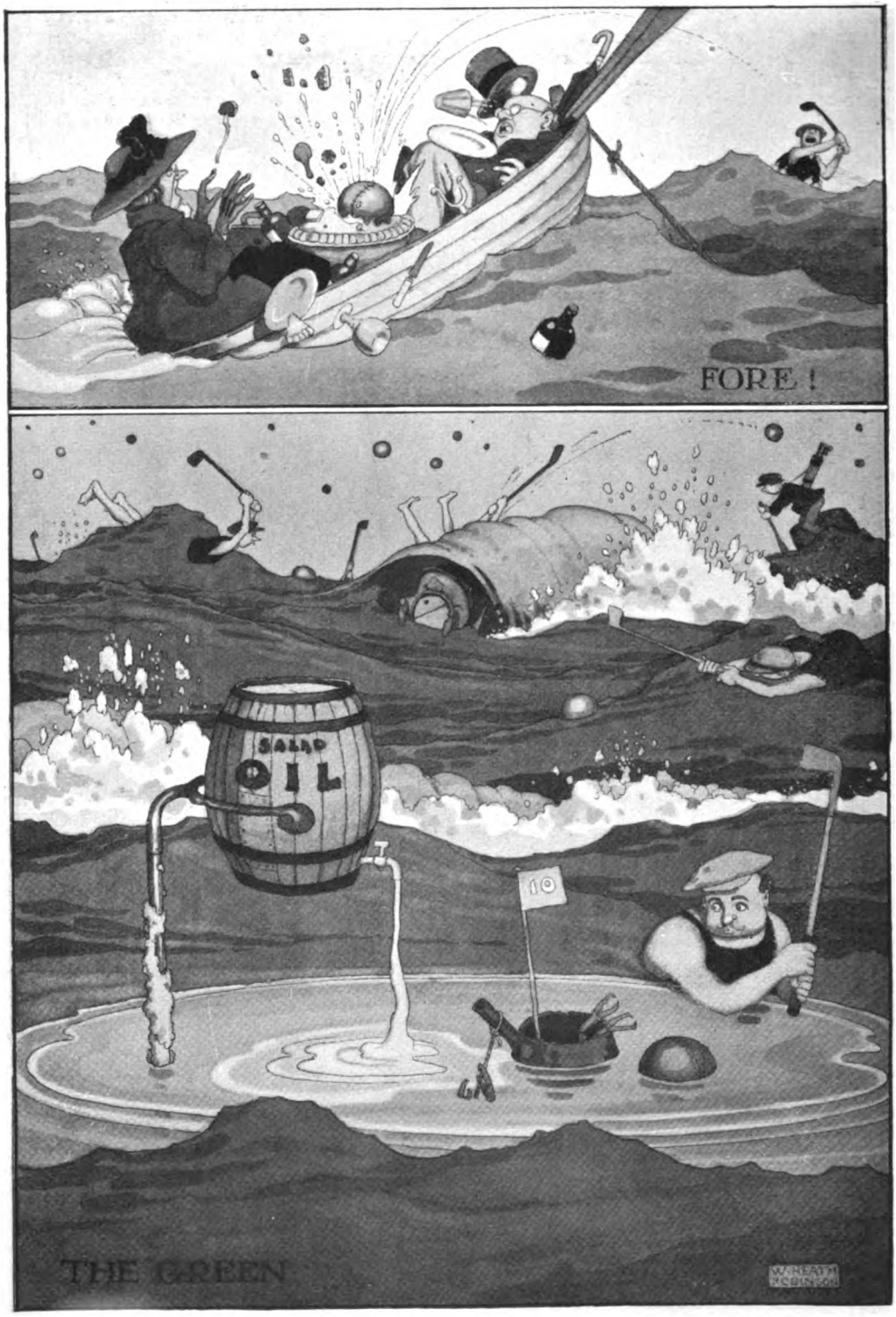


THE LOST BALL.

Aquatic Golf



THE SINISTER QUEST OF NORMAN GREYES

by

E·PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES CROMBIE

No. 8.—THE UNFAMILIAR TRIANGLE.

By JANET.

THIS, as near as I can remember, is a copy of the letter I received that wonderful third day of March :—

137, *Golden Square,*
London, W.C.

Dear Madam,

We beg to inform you that, under the will of the late William Soale, gardener, of Mayford, Surrey, you are entitled to a legacy of £250, free of duty.

As the estate is so small, and the assets are chiefly in War Loan, we are in a position to pay you that sum at once, if you will favour us with a call, or your instructions.

Faithfully,
HASKELL & HAMES.

No one could possibly realize what that money meant for me. I had been working for months at a small dressmaker's in Kensington, earning barely enough to keep myself, slinking to work in the morning and slinking home at night, terrified alike of Michael, the man whom I had once loved, and of Norman Greyes, the man who, without the slightest effort on his part, had attained such a strange and commanding influence over my thoughts and life. And now for a time, at least, I was free. With two hundred and fifty pounds, I could escape from London and hide. None of the obvious places appealed to me in any way. After a great deal of consideration, I took a first-class passage to Marseilles, in the name of Janet Soale, on the slowest P. & O. boat I could find.

I spent a moderate sum in replenishing my wardrobe, sewed a hundred-pound note into my bodice, and started on my adventure. The first few days were wonderful. I found all that I craved for in my new surroundings —freedom from the sordid necessities of daily work, and an indescribable sense of exhilaration, born of the huge spaces, the roaring wind, and the sting of the spray. As soon as the sun began to shine through the grey clouds of the English Channel I felt something stirring in my heart—a sort of passionate content which crept through my whole being as the skies grew clearer through the Bay of Biscay and the sun went down in a clear glory of amber and gold. There was so much that was beautiful in life of which I knew nothing—and I was so anxious to learn.

I HAD made no effort to secure any special place in the dining saloon. Consequently, the seat apportioned to me was in a somewhat remote corner, and my companions of that negative type who seem born to promenade the decks of steamers, point out perfectly obvious porpoises and passing ships to their fellow-passengers, and apparently disappear at the end of the voyage from the face of the earth. It was what suited me best. Day by day I breathed in an atmosphere of repose. Then the natural thing happened. My interest in life began to revive. I was young and strong. The sunshine, the salt air, the complete change did their work. I made some slight change in my toilette one night, and arranged my hair differently. Half-a-dozen people made an excuse to come and talk to me that night on deck. I had as many offers of an escort to view the sights when we landed at Gibraltar on the following day. Men, however, made no appeal to me. I preferred to join a small party, mostly composed of people who sat at my table.

We wandered about the place in the usual disjointed fashion, striving to assume the tourist's intelligent interest in the jumble of

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Spanish remains, modern fortifications, burnous-clad Moors, and preternaturally withered Spaniards. We gaped in the shop-windows and bought the usual variety of useless articles. It was here for the first time that I felt a momentary impulse of sadness. Picture postcards were of no use to me. There was not a soul in the world who was interested in my comings or goings. With me acquaintance seemed to spell tragedy.

Finally, we wandered into the hotel for tea, served in a lounge which one of my travelled companions described as the very Mecca of spurious Orientalism. The room had a glass roof but no windows. It was adorned with artificial flowers rearing their heads from brass pots, marble-topped tables, and plush furniture. None of these things impressed me at the time, for a very adequate reason. I was steeped in amazement at something I saw in the face of the woman who had been its solitary occupant before our coming. She was moderately young, quietly but expensively dressed, of small but graceful figure, and with large dark eyes. It was none of these personal characteristics, however, which compelled and riveted my attention. It was the fact that from her corner in the darkened room she was glaring at me with an expression of intent and deliberate malignity. To the best of my belief I had never seen her before, yet it was a clear and unmistakable fact that in this hotel room at Gibraltar I had suddenly come into contact with a woman who hated me.

WE somehow or other found places at a table. My immediate neighbour was an elderly American gentleman who had once or twice spoken to me on the voyage, but who seemed to spend most of his time seeking for ex-business associates. He had, he told me, been a manufacturer of boots and shoes in a place called Lynn. His name was Frank Popple.

"Say, are you acquainted with the lady in the corner?" he asked, curiously.

I shook my head.

"I have never seen her before," I assured him.

"Is that so?" he replied, incredulously. "I guess she isn't partial to strangers, then. Didn't you notice her looking kind of fierce?"

"I thought that she had probably mistaken me for someone else," I said.

Mr. Popple appeared to find the surmise possible.

"Fiery-tempered lot, these foreigners," he remarked.

I received a further shock about an hour later, when I found the same woman ensconced in a corner of the tender which was to take us back to the steamer, surrounded by two much-belabelled steamer-trunks, a dressing-case, hat-box, and other feminine impedimenta. She scowled at me sullenly when we came on board, and, acting entirely on impulse, I walked straight across to her.

"Have I offended you in any way?" I inquired. "It seems to me that we are strangers."

She looked at me steadfastly. Her face, which normally must have been soft and pretty, had become hard and cold. Her eyes still told their tale of hatred.

"You are Janet Stanfield, are you not?" she asked.

"That is certainly my name," I admitted, more puzzled than ever. "How do you know it?"

She looked at me in doubting silence. The sun was pouring down upon us. The strange, foreign odour of the place, pungent but fascinating to me in its novelty, was in my nostrils. On the quay, a ruffianly-looking Spaniard, with olive cheeks, jet-black hair, and flashing eyes, was singing a sweet but sensuous melody. In the background, one heard from across the harbour the sad chant of the Lascars as they bent over their toil on the deck of an out-going steamer. All these things became mingled with my impressions of the moment.

"I have seen your picture," she said, gloomily.

"Where?"

"In New York. He carried it with him." She turned deliberately away, as though determined not to enter into any further conversation. I found her unsociability to some extent a relief, but when I stepped on board again my blessed peace of mind was gone. I relapsed into my former frame of mind and endeavoured to keep away from everyone. Mr. Popple, however, refused to accept my plain hints. He dragged his chair over to my corner on deck.

"Mrs. Louisa K. Martin, that lady's name," he informed me, "comes from way out West, beyond Milwaukee. She is getting out at Marseilles."

"I had forgotten all about her," I replied, mendaciously.

Mr. Popple scratched his chin thoughtfully. He was a large man, clean-shaven, with a ponderous jaw but kindly eyes, with little creases at the side. He seemed a little hurt at my lack of confidence.

"I'd give her a wide berth if I were you," he advised. "Travelling about as much as I do, I've got kind of used to taking stock of people's expressions, and the way she looked at you was real mean."

I declined to continue the conversation and announced my intention of going to bed. As I entered the music-room on the way to my cabin, there was a curious cessation of conversation. Mrs. Louisa K. Martin, who

was seated in an easy-chair, very becomingly dressed in black, with a long rope of pearls around her neck, looked at me with steady insolence. I walked straight up to her chair. I knew that she had been saying things about me and I was furious.

"Are you meeting my husband at Marseilles, Mrs. Martin?" I asked her.

I was sorry for the question directly the words had left my lips—sorry for her, too, in a way. She turned deathly pale, and if looks could have killed I should have been a dead woman. She made no answer at all. I waited for a moment and then passed on to my state-room.

IT must have been about ten o'clock that night when I heard a soft tapping at my door. I guessed at once who it was, and I guessed rightly. It was Mrs. Louisa Martin, wrapped in a dressing-gown and with slippers on her feet. She closed the door carefully and she put her fingers to her lips

"We must be careful," she whispered. "You were mad to speak of Michael openly."

"Of my husband?"

She laughed contemptuously.

"He married me years before you," she replied, "and another before either of us."

I turned away from her that she should not see the hate in my face. Some conviction of this sort had been growing upon me of late.

"When two women love the same man," Louisa Martin continued, "they should forget everything when he is in danger. I don't see love in your face," she went on. "Then why are you here?"

"I see no reason why I should discuss that or any other subject with you," I answered, "but as a matter of fact I had no idea that Michael was in Marseilles."

I thought that she would have struck me. The fire of unbelief blazed in her eyes.

"What are you doing on this steamer, then?" she demanded.

"I came for a holiday trip," I told her.

She leaned a little towards me. In the unshaded light of the cabin her face seemed wan, almost aged.

"Listen!" she said. "This is a matter of life or death for Michael. You heard through someone of his being in Marseilles. Tell me through whom?"

"I swear that I had no idea he was there," I repeated.

"You fool!" she exclaimed. "Can't you see that you are probably followed—that the police are making use of you?"

"You are in the same position yourself," I reminded her.

"Indeed I am not," she assured me, earnestly. "I was born in Marseilles. I have travelled there repeatedly. I know every corner and stone of the place. It was I who taught Michael that it was the finest hiding-place in the world for the educated criminal. It was I who took him where he is now."

Our conversation was suddenly interrupted in a very unexpected fashion. My stewardess entered, with a thin blue strip in her hand.

"Wireless for you, Mrs. Soale," she announced, addressing me by the name under which I had booked my passage.

"For me?" I repeated, incredulously. "There must be some mistake. Nobody knows that I am on board."

"It's Mrs. Soale, right enough," the stewardess assured me. "There's no one else of that name amongst the passengers."

I tore open the envelope. My companion watched me with glittering eyes. She could scarcely wait until the stewardess had departed.

"You liar!" she hissed. "You see what you have done! You have laid a trail for the police to follow from London to Marseilles."

She poured out abuse. I heard nothing. My whole attention was fixed upon those few words, staring at me from the telegraph form:—

Dombey 31st March Genesis Louise

I felt her fingers suddenly grip my arm. She read the message over my shoulder.

"Get the code," she whispered, hoarsely. "Quick!"

"What code?" I demanded. "I don't know what you're talking about."

I suppose she must have been convinced at last, for she dropped my wrist and hurried to the door.

"Wait here," she ordered, snatching the message from my hand.

There was a heavy swell that day, and I was glad to sit down upon my bunk. She returned in a very few moments. Her cheeks were flushed. She handed me back the message. Underneath it she had pencilled the interpretation:—

Danger 97 it must be dealt with promptly Louisa.

I looked at it and shook my head.

"I suppose I am a fool," I admitted, "but I can't understand a word."

"You are a fool," she agreed. "No wonder Michael never trusted you with a code! It means that someone dangerous must be travelling in state-room ninety-seven, who must be dealt with promptly by me—Louisa—my name. Do you understand now?"

"But how could Michael know that I was

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on the steamer, and why should he have sent this message to me instead of to you?" I demanded.

"The Chief of Police at Marseilles has a copy of every passenger list of steamers leaving London and calling at Marseilles, forwarded overland," she replied. "Michael has a friend in the Bureau. It is possible that I am being watched. He knew quite well that I should find you out, and that I should be of more use than you were likely to be. Now to discover who is travelling in state-room number ninety-seven."

She called to the steward, who was passing

outside. He unhooked the door and looked in.

"Steward, can you tell me the name of the gentleman in number ninety-seven?" she inquired.

He shook his head.

"That's the other side of the ship, madam."

She held out a Treasury note.

"Please find out," she begged.

He was back again in less than a min te.

"Mr. Popple, madam—an American gentleman," he announced.

Even as he spoke, we heard a familiar and resonant voice outside.

"I put his plant down at a hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and I cleaned up the deal. Some push down our way, sir!"

Mr. Popple passed on. The woman whose name was Louisa stood looking at me.

"From the first I suspected him," she whispered. "He must be Bill Lund, from Chicago. This commercial traveller business is his stunt."

"What are you going to do?" I asked.

She smiled in a peculiar fashion.

"Obey Michael," she answered softly.

THE next morning, Mr. Popple came over and talked to me again. He had shown me from the first a considerable amount of attention, but his conversation had always been of the most ordinary kind. This morning, however, in the midst of a discussion on ladies' footwear, he broke off and addressed me in different fashion.

"So you're making friends with the woman who looked as though she wanted to bite your head off at Gibraltar," he remarked.

"I shouldn't have said so," I replied, cautiously.

"She was in your state-room last night, wasn't she?" he queried.

"For a moment or two," I admitted. "Why not?"

He watched the smoke from his cigar thoughtfully.

"I guess you've common sense enough to take a word of advice," he said. "Here it is. Keep out of it."

"Keep out of what?" I demanded.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"That's a fine shoal of porpoises," he observed, looking over the side of the ship. "I don't know as I've ever seen a finer in these waters."

"In other words," I ventured, smiling——

"Incident closed," he declared. "Maybe I've opened my mouth too wide as it is."

But as a matter of fact he had not. The last few days had seen a wonderful change in me. I scarcely knew myself, scarcely realized the new thoughts with which I lived, the slow falling away of the spurious fancies which life with Michael had fostered. These few days, freed from the constant environment of the city, with its sordid tasks and obligations, solitude in the great spaces, with the sea and the wind and the stars, had been like a tonic to my soul. In plain words, my association with Michael had become loathsome to me. I was filled with a passionate desire to start life again as an honest woman.

So, although I knew now for certain that Mr. Popple was a detective, I said no word of this to Louisa, even though, during the next few hours, I witnessed an amazing development of their acquaintance. They sat together for several hours, and Louisa's beautiful eyes seemed every moment to become more eloquent. Without a doubt, she had made up her mind to captivate him, and to all appearance she was succeeding. I was walking up and down the deck with the doctor, and we heard scraps of their conversation as we passed—an assignation for the morrow evening at Marseilles, proposed boldly enough by Mr. Popple, and assented to by a timorous but eloquent flash of the eyes by Louisa. After dinner they took their coffee out on deck. Their heads were even closer together, their voices dropped. People, as they passed, began to smile. It was obvious that an affair was in progress. I was surprised, therefore, to hear Mr. Popple suddenly address the doctor, who had joined me again for a few minutes.

"Just one moment, Doc."

We stopped at once. Mr. Popple seemed to rise with difficulty to his feet.

"Guess I am sick, Doc. Just step round to my state-room with me for a moment."

Mr. Popple, suddenly very pale, swayed on his feet and clutched at the doctor's arm. I expected every moment to see him collapse. We all turned to Louisa. She shook her head, apparently as bewildered as the rest of us.

"We had just finished our coffee," she explained, "when Mr. Popple, who had been talking a great deal, became silent. He spoke of a pain in his head and I thought he seemed queer. Then he called out to the doctor. That is all I know about it."

By degrees the others melted away. I sank into Mr. Popple's vacant chair. As soon as we were alone, Mrs. Louisa Martin looked at me covertly. There was a flash of triumph in her half-closed eyes.

"So!" she murmured. "I do not think that Mr. Popple will follow me about Marseilles."

"Do you mean that you have poisoned him?" I gasped.

She looked at me with a queer little smile.

"Some," she said, "prefer to shoot. I choose the way of safety."

Then I knew that Michael had told her everything. In that moment, all that I had ever felt of love for him turned to hate.

WE entered the harbour at Marseilles late on the following morning, and drifted down on our way to the dock. The sun was shining, and the heat, now that we had left the breezes of the open sea, was almost unbearable. It was a morning of acute sensations. I remember everything—the pungent odours of the harbour, the smell of fresh tar, of a cargo of dried onions, a passing whiff of fragrance from the baskets of the flower women on the quay. We stood leaning over the side, waiting, prepared to land, but waiting for the gendarmes at the further end of the gangway to give the word. Suddenly I felt a little thrill pass through my whole body. Notwithstanding the hot sunshine, I was so cold that I felt myself shivering. Leaning with his back to one of the wooden pillars was a man with a tanned, almost swarthy skin, lean-faced, with a hungry, wolf-like droop of his thin lips. He was shabbily dressed even for a labourer, with brown overall, ragged blue trousers, boots devoid of laces, and a soiled tweed cap. It was more than a disguise—it was a metamorphosis—yet I knew Michael, and although he never glanced again in my direction, I knew that he had recognized me. I did then what was, in the circumstances, a foolish action. I made my way to where Louisa was standing and I touched her on the arm.

"Look there," I said, directing her attention cautiously towards the lounging figure.

She looked at him for a moment without interest. Then suddenly the change came into her face. Her lips were a little parted, the colour was drained from her cheeks, her eyes were filled with the anticipation of evil things. She clutched at my arm.

"There is danger," she muttered. "He has been obliged to fly. Alas! our week at the villa exists no longer."

A moment afterwards there was a movement towards the gangway. I followed the others off the ship, and waited until a magnificent-looking functionary, smelling of garlic, had made mystic signs with a piece of chalk upon my modest trunk. The porter shouldered it and turned to me for instructions.

"A carriage to the Hotel Splendide," I directed.

I was on the point of entering it when I felt a touch upon my arm.

"He insists upon seeing you," she whispered in a low tone. "Where are you going?"

"To the Hotel Splendide," I told her, with a sinking heart.

"I shall fetch you to-night at six o'clock."

"Why does Michael want to see me?" I asked, reluctantly.

"One does not ask Michael questions," she answered, with a sneer. "You should have found that out by this time."

I FELT as though an ugly cloud were looming over this wonderful holiday of mine, and I spent a restless and unsatisfactory afternoon. At six o'clock Louisa fetched me in a small *fiacre*, and we drove slowly and with horrible jolts into one of the foulest seafaring slums one could imagine. I knew nothing at the time, but I discovered afterwards that it was a region of evil repute throughout not only Marseilles but throughout Europe, a region of myriad pungent odours, a tawdry medley of *cafés*, flaunting women, and rollicking groups of drink-inflamed men. I began to feel fear.

"Where are we going?" I demanded.

"To the only place where Michael can hide in safety," Louisa replied. "Even the police of Marseilles would scarcely dare to seek him here."

"It is not fit for us," I muttered, with my eyes fixed upon the streets.

Louisa sneered.

"It is clear that you were never the woman for Michael," she rejoined.

We stopped at last at the end of a dark and narrow street, a place so squalid and unsavoury that I hesitated to leave the vehicle. Louisa, however, elbowed me out and half pushed, half conducted me along an entry, with a high wall on either side, a slimy place with the swish of waves distinctly audible. At the extreme end she pushed open a door on the left-hand side. We found ourselves in a *café* of the poorest class, with sanded floors and iron tables. A woman, fat and with a hideous face, stood behind the bar, and whenever I desire to think of something horrible I think of the stealthy, vicious faces of the men who first glared and then leered at us as we crossed the threshold.

Louisa went straight to the woman behind the bar and whispered in her ear. The woman, who had at least three or four chins, nodded ponderously and smiled, showing a row of yellow, discoloured teeth. She glanced cautiously around the place, as though to make sure that no stranger was amongst her *clientèle*. Then, with a fat, be-ringed finger, she beckoned us behind the counter, and led us down some steps, along a passage, into a sombre and fearsome-looking apartment, tawdrily furnished, with a cracked gilt mirror upon the mantelpiece, walls reeking with damp, and some violet plush chairs of incredible shabbiness. In the corner was a

"You devil!" he said to me, slowly and menacingly. "It is you who have brought your damned lover-policeman here."

bed, and upon it Michael was seated, still in his disguise of a French *ouvrier*, but with a new look upon his face—the hunted, desperate look of a man at bay. What I read in his eyes as the woman, with an evil chuckle, left us, made my blood run cold. I had the feeling that I was trapped.

"You devil!" he said to me, slowly and menacingly. "It is you who have brought your damned lover-policeman here!"

"It is false," I replied. "I came to Marseilles for a holiday only."

"A holiday!" Michael repeated, bitterly.

"A holiday!" Louisa almost shrieked. "Hear her! But listen," she added, with a terrible smile. "There is time yet to show you how Michael and I deal with informers!"

By NORMAN GREYES.

DURING the third week of March, after a somewhat restless few months of travel in Egypt and Algeria, I reached Monte Carlo to find a telegram from my friend Rimmington, begging me to come at once to Marseilles. I realized that there could be but one reason for such a request, and in less than twelve hours I found myself with Rimmington and M. Demayel, the Chief of the Marseilles Police, ransacking the contents of a small villa in the suburbs of Marseilles, which had lately been the scene of one of those crimes for which the place was fast gaining an unenviable notoriety.

I had had no conversation with Rimmington, and I had no idea why my help had been sought in this case, which appeared to have no special characteristics. The late inhabitant of the villa, a man of over seventy years of age, had been found twenty-four hours ago, suffering from severe wounds about the head and in a state of collapse. He was lying in a neighbouring hospital and was unlikely to recover. This much, however, was clear. He had been robbed of a large sum of money, the possession of which he had foolishly bragged about in a neighbouring *café*, and there seemed to be but little doubt that the theft had been committed by a band of ill-doers who for the last few months had been the terror of the neighbourhood. We went through the usual routine of examining the means by which entrance had been forced into the house and hearing the evidence of the local gendarmerie. Afterwards we drove, in silence, to the Police headquarters, and it was in M. Demayel's private room there that Rimmington at last explained what had been puzzling me so much.

"You know, of course, Greyes," he began, "what my having sent for you means?"

"Michael, I hope."

Rimmington nodded. I could tell by the gleam in his rather cold grey eyes that he believed the end to be near at last.

"We traced him to Paris," he said, "and afterwards here. Almost immediately, as Monsieur Demayel will tell you, there was not only an increase in the number of crimes in the district, but there were evidences of a master-mind behind them all. Crime here had become brain-controlled. Monsieur Demayel told me, an hour or so ago, that thefts to the value of over eleven million francs had been committed within the last two months."

"And the connecting link?" I questioned.

"Eight days ago," Rimmington said, watching me closely, "Janet Soale sailed from Tilbury for Marseilles. The woman who was Michael's companion in New York, who goes by the name of Louisa Martin, after travelling from America to Havre, joined the same steamer at Gibraltar, having evidently chosen a circuitous route to avoid suspicion. Those two women are both on their way to Marseilles—they are due to arrive, in fact, to-night—and will be closely watched. Furthermore, I think that Monsieur Demayel can show you something of interest."

M. DEMAYEL placed a leather-bound volume before me and pointed to an entry.

"This," he explained, "is a small collection of *dossiers* which have never been verified."

I read the few lines quickly:—

Henri Guy, French-Colonial, bachelor, 5ft. 6in., morose, grey hair and beard, physical appearance described elsewhere, address Villa Violette, Bandol. Has large correspondence. Subscribes to English newspapers, amongst which "Golf Illustrated." Has small car, and has been seen on Hyères Golf Links.

"And finally?" I asked.

"The person in question," M. Demayel continued, "is reported to have changed at the Casino at Bandol last evening one of the mille notes stolen from the house we visited this afternoon."

I glanced at my watch.

"How far is it to Bandol?" I inquired.

"Forty-seven kilometres," the Chief of the Police replied, "and we should have been there by now but my friend Mr. Rimmington here insisted upon waiting for you."

I asked only one question on the way.

"You spoke of Janet Soale as coming out on the boat," I said to Rimmington. "That was her name before she married Michael."

Rimmington nodded.

"For some reason or other she has renewed it. It is possible that she has discovered something about Michael which I have suspected for some time."

I controlled my voice as well as I could. I did not wish even Rimmington to know how much this meant to me.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"I believe," he replied, "that Michael was married many years ago to this woman, Louisa Martin. Janet Soale may have got to know of this. She may be coming out

to try to discover the truth. It is certain that for many months she has not been in communication with Michael."

The Chief of the Police gazed thoughtfully out of the window.

"It is a curious circumstance," he remarked, "in the lives of most of the great criminals of modern days, that their end has been brought about by their exciting the jealousy of women. Here are two at the present moment on their way to Marseilles to visit the man whom you call Michael. Louisa Martin has been followed from New York by a United States detective who has been hunting Michael for years, and it was Janet Soale's visit to Marseilles which changed suspicion into conviction with our friend Rimmington here. My predecessor used always to say, 'Give the man rope. Follow the woman.'"

WE reached Bandol just before dusk, and found the Villa Violette on the outskirts of the town: a secluded little house, built amongst some rocks on the extreme edge of the bay. We left the car in the road and took the path which led to the front door. Our summons was at once answered by a stout, good-humoured-looking Frenchwoman, who shook her head regretfully when we inquired for M. Guy.

"Monsieur is out in his automobile," she told us. "He may return at any moment, or perhaps not at all to-night. It is most unfortunate. The gentlemen will leave a message?"

"We will come in and wait for a little time," Demayel suggested.

The woman did not remove her portly form from the threshold.

"That, alas! monsieur, is impossible!" she declared. "My master receives few visitors, and he would not suffer anyone in the house."

M. Demayel touched her on the shoulder. He was looking curiously into her face.

"Madam," he said, "I am *Chef de la Sûreté* of Marseilles, and I go where I choose. Furthermore, it seems that your face is familiar to me."

She shrank away. There was a malign look suddenly in her dark eyes.

"*Chef de la Sûreté!*" she muttered. "But who has done wrong here?"

We searched the sitting-room and dining-room of M. Henri Guy, and we found nothing that might not have belonged to a French-Colonial who had made a small fortune in sugar. But in his bedroom, covered over with a sheet and hidden behind a cupboard, I found a prize indeed. I found the golf clubs which Stanfield had used when he had played against me at Woking. I drew from the bag the putter which had sealed my defeat, and, even in that moment of triumph, I felt a little thrill of pleasure when I realized its perfect balance.

"Our search is over,' I pronounced.

"Our search is not over," Rimmington reminded me, "until we have found the man."

We were there altogether for half an hour, during which time we searched the place closely. The small garage was empty, and Rimmington pointed out the six or eight empty tins which had evidently just been used.

"Filled up for a journey," he remarked. "I don't think that we shall see anything of our man to-day."

We announced our intended departure. The housekeeper, who now seemed certain of her master's immediate return, did her best to persuade us to linger. M. Demayel cut her short.

"Madam," he said, "you will be so good as to consider yourself under surveillance. I shall leave a gendarme in the house with you. To-morrow you will be examined. In the meantime, make no attempt to communicate with anybody."

The woman was no longer the smooth-tongued, respectable domestic. She burst into a torrent of furious complaints and abuse, relapsing into a French *argot* which was absolutely incomprehensible to me. M. Demayel listened to her thoughtfully. Then he turned to the gendarme who had accompanied us from Marseilles on the front seat of the car, and whom he was leaving behind.

"Do not let this woman out of your sight," he ordered. "She is of the Maritime Quartier, where I suspect her master is in hiding by now."

The gendarme saluted, and laid his hand upon the housekeeper's shoulder. Suddenly she burst into a fit of laughter, and pointed up the avenue.

"It is monsieur who returns," she announced. "Now, what will you say to him—you who have ransacked his rooms and upset his house? Chief of the Police, indeed! La, la!"

We stood by the front door, and I, for my part, was amazed. An elderly gentleman of highly-respectable appearance drove up in a small Citroyen car and lifted his soft black felt hat to us courteously.

"Good evening, gentlemen," he said. "You are paying me a visit?"

"You are Monsieur Guy?" Demayel inquired.

"That is certainly my name," was the prompt reply.

"And this is your house?"

"I rent it subject to your pleasure, gentlemen."

He descended from the car, and looked from one to the other of us inquiringly. I knew better than any other what a past

master Michael was in the art of disguises, but I knew very well that this was not he. Rimmington's eyes met mine. We were both agreed.

"My name is Demayel," the Chief announced. "I am the *Chef de la Sûreté* in Marseilles. You will be so good as to answer me a few questions."

"*Chef de la Sûreté!*" the newcomer repeated, and if his amazement were feigned, it was very well feigned indeed.

"But certainly! You have lived here for how long?"

"For ten months, monsieur."

"You changed a mille note at the Casino yesterday?"

"I certainly did."

"From where did you obtain it?"

"From my desk, monsieur. It has lain there for weeks."

I ventured to ask a question on my own account.

"This is your only car?"

"Naturally," was the prompt response. "There is no room in my garage for more than one."

I excused myself for a moment, and returned with the bag of golf clubs.

"These are perhaps yours?" I asked him.

He shook his head.

"They were left by a former tenant," he replied. "I know nothing of their use."

I turned into the garage and wheeled out one of the rubber tyres which were ranged against the wall.

"If you have no other car," I asked him, "how is it all the tyres in your garage are like this one—two sizes larger than those on the Citroyen you were driving?"

He hesitated, and turned his head. He knew then that it was the end. The gendarme was returning with a fat little man, who wore no coat and waistcoat, and reeked of garlic.

"This man keeps the *café* at the corner," the former announced. "He knows his neighbour Guy well."

"Is this Monsieur Guy?" Demayel asked.

The innkeeper was more than emphatic, he was vehement.

"Upon my soul, no!" he declared. "Monsieur Guy I know well. This gentleman is a stranger. Monsieur Guy left this morning in his car for Paris, one heard."

Demayel turned to the pseudo M. Guy.

"Well?"

The man shrugged his shoulders.

"I have done what I was paid for," he said, sullenly. "I am at your disposal, gentlemen."

"Close the place up," Demayel directed the gendarme, "and take this woman and the man to Marseilles. Nothing more will happen here. As for us," he went on, turning to Rimmington and myself, "we must now await the arrival of the steamer in Marseilles to-night. One of the two women, if not both, will lead us to the man we seek."

WE dined that night, Rimmington and I, in a remote corner of a great bustling restaurant, receiving more than our due share of attention owing to the fact that M. Demayel had himself telephoned and ordered the table. The latter had promised to join us for coffee, but before we reached that stage of our repast we were surprised to see him coming hastily towards us, followed by a tall, bearded man of military bearing. Demayel was a man of imperturbable expression, yet it was obvious that he brought news.

"Messieurs," he said, as he sat for a moment at our table, "a grave thing has happened. Let me explain briefly. The young man who has acted as my secretary for five years has absconded. It is proved that he has been in league with a great criminal organization ever since he has held his post. It is he, without a doubt, who warned the man whom you call Michael. Worse than that, his report to me that the *Carlyon* would not reach dock until to-night was a lie. She arrived this morning, and landed her passengers this afternoon. My plans for having those two women watched have been rendered abortive."

A surge of nameless fears suddenly rose up in my heart. I pictured Janet in danger. I did not believe that she had come to Marseilles to rejoin Michael. I half rose to my feet, but Demayel waved me back.

"Listen!" he continued. "This much we know at present. The Englishwoman went first to the Hotel Splendide. At six o'clock this evening she was called for by the other woman, and they drove off alone. They were shadowed, fortunately, by Lund, the American detective who followed Louisa Martin over, and who reports that his life was attempted last night. This woman Martin, it seems, has an evil reputation. She has been in prison twice in her younger days in Paris, and she was tried for murder seven years ago. She is desperately cruel, but of desperate courage. Lund reports that there is ill blood between the two women. He is convinced that the Englishwoman, Janet Soale, as she called herself on the steamer, has been decoyed into some place to meet Michael."

"How far did he follow them?" I asked. "Where is he now?"

"He followed them into the worst quarter of Marseilles," Demayel replied, "but as soon as he discovered their destination he had the good sense to return for aid. They

are in the one quarter of the city which I have not yet succeeded in clearing. We have hesitated many times when on the point of attempting a *coup* here. To-night the attempt shall be made."

"Let us start!" I exclaimed, eagerly.

We moved towards the door.

"I deeply regret," Demayel announced, "that this is an adventure on which I cannot accompany you. If I were to show myself in the Quartier I should not only endanger your lives but I should of an absolute certainty forfeit my own. Monsieur Santel here," he added, turning to his companion, "will take command of the expedition. Lund is in one of the cars outside. A sufficient force of gendarmes has already penetrated secretly into the Quartier. It remains only for me to wish you good fortune."

IN the car which we found waiting for us, we passed from the broad thoroughfares of the city to a region of increasing squalor and ugliness, along boulevards whose cobbled stones were littered with refuse, where the men and women who sat at their windows became more and more repulsive. The gaiety of the city was succeeded by a sombre silence. There was no music in the *cafés*, no laughter from the lips of the women. One seemed to read in those hungry, unwashed, and painted faces one common characteristic—greed. Furtive eyes followed our car lustfully because it meant wealth. Once or twice men half rose from their places, as though to follow us. It was difficult to imagine that this was a street in a civilized city.

"One sees little of the law down here," I remarked.

Our guide shrugged his shoulders.

"The castaways of the world are to be found always in a great port," he said. "We leave them alone when we can. This place is their safety-valve. When we are forced to come, we come as we have to-night—in hundreds."

I realized what he meant when we descended, a few minutes later. At every corner of the little network of streets through which we pushed our way, some apparent lounger whispered a word in Santel's ear. When, at last, we reached the end of a gloomy street, which terminated with the great iron gates of a shipyard, our guide turned and spoke to us.

"Follow me," he directed, "and be discreet. Remember a blow of the fists will send a hundred of these rats to their holes—but always look behind."

We descended some small stone steps, passed along a narrow passage, and entered a *café*, the most dilapidated and filthy which I have ever been in. There were a dozen men seated around, drinking, two or three asleep or drunk, one who covered up his face. A woman lolled across the counter and looked at us, a woman whose untidy clothing seemed to be falling away from her repulsive body. She had a heavy moustache upon her upper lip, and narrow jet-black eyes.

"In the name of the Police, madam," Santel whispered in her ear.

"At your service," she replied

"We want none of your usual jail birds," Santel continued. "Stand on one side, please."

The woman's face was hideous, but she shrugged her shoulders.

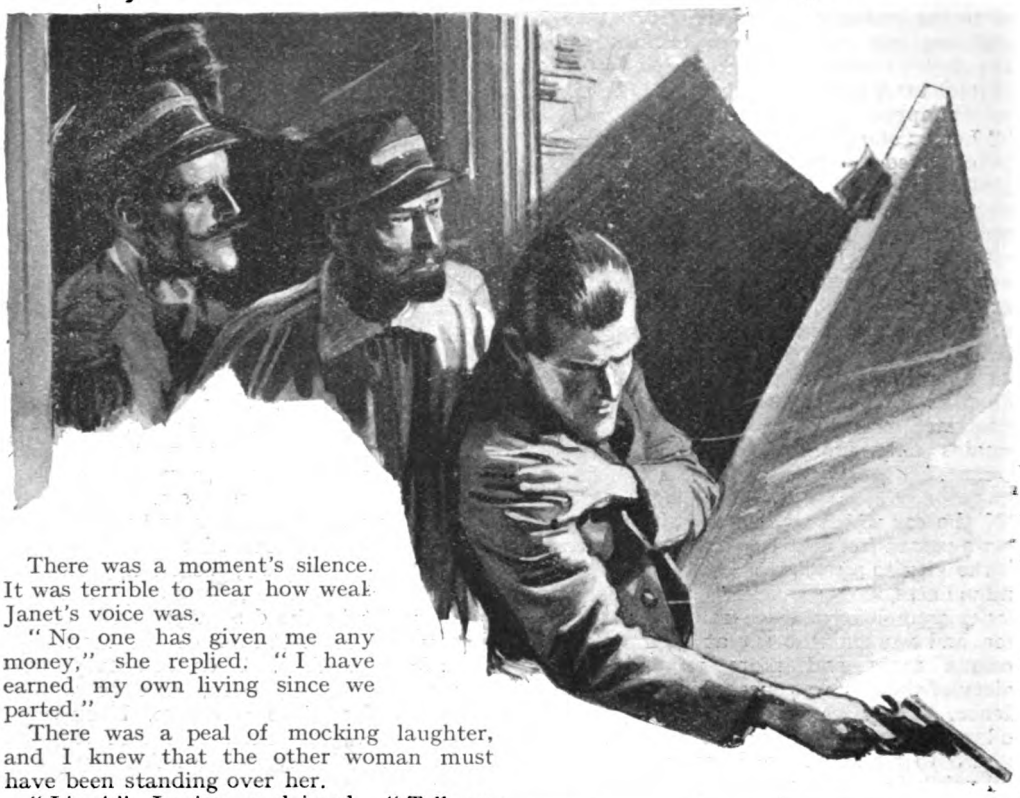
"There is nothing," she muttered. "One has been here, perhaps, but he has gone."

We passed behind that counter, through a door, into a noisome house, wrapped in utter darkness. Four other men seemed to have crept up to us like shadows and we all had electric torches. Some of the rooms had been used for sleeping; some, apparently, for a filthy carouse. All were empty. At a certain point in the descent of some stone steps we paused. Three of the men felt about for some time. Then an unsuspected door slowly swung open, a door which seemed to lead into a chasm, black and impenetrable. The man who had slipped past Santel and become our guide stretched up his hand and pulled down a long, thin ladder. He let it down until it touched the ground. One by one we descended into what seemed to be a great cellar. At the farther end was a kink of light from the room beyond, and a sound which for the moment made a madman of me—the sound of a woman crying. I stumbled across the uneven floor, but Santel caught hold of my arm.

"Be careful," he muttered. "If our man is there and sees you, he will shoot. Let the others surround him. We have a plan."

I scarcely heard him, but I held my breath and kept silence while someone attempted to find means of ingress. We were there, seven of us, mad with the desire for this man's capture, yet for the first few moments the stone walls seemed to mock us. Lund was running his fingers round the chinks of what seemed to be the door, but could find no opening. Then, suddenly, I heard Michael's voice. Cold and measured as ever, it seemed to me, though he must have known that he was in desperate straits.

"For the last time, Janet, the truth," he said. "What has become of the money which was handed over to you—the price of the jewels—and why have you followed me to Marseilles?"



There was a moment's silence. It was terrible to hear how weak Janet's voice was.

"No one has given me any money," she replied. "I have earned my own living since we parted."

There was a peal of mocking laughter, and I knew that the other woman must have been standing over her.

"Liar!" Louisa exclaimed. "Tell us why you came to Marseilles, and why Rimmington, the English detective, has followed. Tell us who called your new lover, Norman Greyes, from Monte Carlo?"

"I know nothing of any of those things," was the weak reply. "My uncle left me two hundred and fifty pounds—Soale, the gardener, who once worked for you, Michael. I came to Marseilles for a rest and a holiday."

Again there was a peal of derisive laughter from Louisa Martin, followed by the soft ringing of an electric bell and a fierce oath from Michael. There was a moment's silence, the scurrying of feet, the flinging back of what sounded like a door. Michael's voice, when he spoke, had changed. Fear at last seemed to have entered into him.

"You have had your chance, Janet," he said. "I shall leave you to Louisa."

Janet's pitiful voice was roused almost to a shriek.

"Don't leave me alone with her, Michael!" she implored. "She terrifies me!"

A fortunate madness seized me. I flung my whole weight against the door, and we fell into the place in a heap. The impression of those few moments will never fade from my memory. Janet, her feet and arms tied with cord, white and numb with fear, was lying on the ground, Louisa Martin, with the face of a Fury and eyes filled with hate, leaning over her. Michael, with unrecognizable face but unforgettable eyes, was already half-way through a trap-door. He raised his arm simultaneously with mine. Our pistols spoke together, and the sound of their report was followed almost immediately by the crashing of the trap-door. I felt a sharp pain in my shoulder, and for a moment I think I went mad. I was cutting the cords which bound Janet's hands and feet, talking to her foolishly, trying to keep back the faintness which threatened me. Then the mist came and the room rocked. The last thing I remembered was Louisa Martin's laugh.

Our pistols spoke together, and the sound of their report was followed almost immediately by the crashing of the trap-door.

MY first visitor in the hospital, six weeks later, was M. Demayel. He adopted a tone of apology.

"That man's escape, Sir Norman," he confessed, "was a most deplorable incident."

"How did he get away?" I inquired.

"He descended through the trap-door

from the room in which you found him," M. Demayel explained, "by means of a rope ladder, to a narrow inlet of the harbour, which at full tide is directly underneath. He secured the trap-door behind him by means of a bolt, got into a petrol launch, and apparently made his way across the bay. The launch was discovered next day upon the beach, and there is a theory that he was washed overboard by a heavy sea. At any rate, he has not been seen or heard of since."

"Louisa Martin?" I asked.

"Safe for seven years," was the grim reply.

"And—the Englishwoman?"

M. Demayel glanced suspiciously at the bowl of flowers by my bedside.

"She remained in Marseilles for some time. I do not know her present whereabouts."

As soon as my visitor had gone I sent for the nurse.

"From whom did these flowers come?" I inquired.

She smiled as a Frenchwoman does who scents a romance.

"Until you were out of danger," she told me, "a very beautiful English lady called every day. A week ago she returned to England, but she left with the Sister an order on a florist for roses every day for a fortnight."

"She left no note or message?"

"Nothing."

"When can I leave for England?" I demanded.

The nurse looked at me reproachfully.

"In a fortnight, if you behave," she answered. "Perhaps never, if you work yourself into a fever."

"Nurse," I asked, "have you ever been in love?"

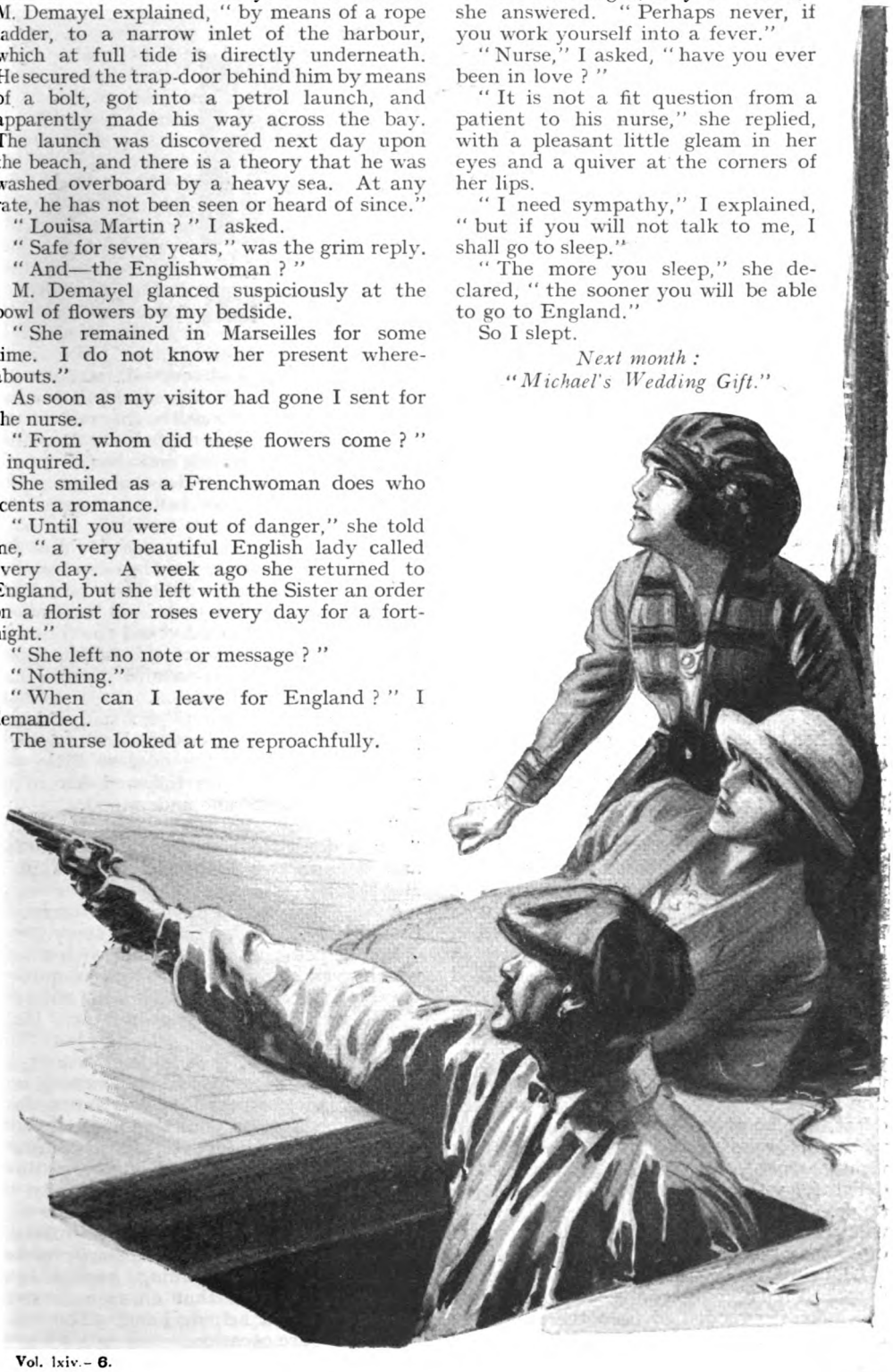
"It is not a fit question from a patient to his nurse," she replied, with a pleasant little gleam in her eyes and a quiver at the corners of her lips.

"I need sympathy," I explained, "but if you will not talk to me, I shall go to sleep."

"The more you sleep," she declared, "the sooner you will be able to go to England."

So I slept.

Next month:
"Michael's Wedding Gift."



BARBARA GETS BUSY

A CRICKET STORY

by

REEVES SHAW

ILLUSTRATED BY H. ELCOCK

THE girl in the opposite corner read her morning paper steadily; ever since they had left St. Pancras, a good three minutes ago, her eyes had not wavered from the print.

Bruce Avenell read his, too, but not so steadily, for he was a bit unnerved. Only just in time had he dashed up the platform and flung his long cricket-bag into the nearest carriage; half the train had emerged from the station before he realized that the prettiest little lady in all the world was leaving London that day, and that Fate had made her his only travelling-companion.

A newspaper could have had no more wonderful news than that, so Avenell used his merely as a cover from which to observe the most confoundedly attractive girl he had ever encountered. Did girls have their hair up at eighteen, he wondered; or was she a few years older than that? He couldn't tell, for he had no sisters of his own to judge by, and, though he himself was twenty-five, he had had no enlightening adventures in love. Cricket, and business, had so far filled his life very completely.

Avenell decided that since he could scarcely stare, even covertly, at his companion the whole journey through, the best thing to do was to sleep. This good resolution he immediately proceeded to put into effect, but he at once discovered that, even when his eyes were to all appearances tightly closed, he could still retain the delightful vision of a very shapely silk-clad ankle. Only fools, thought Avenell, would think seriously of sleeping in the forenoon of a sunny day in July.

Glancing up, he could have sworn that he surprised a laughing glimpse at him. But the light, if ever it had been there, died so abruptly in the eyes, and the lips, if ever they had curved, straightened again so unmistakably, that Avenell hastily resumed his interrupted contemplation of silk and shoe.

It was many minutes later before he again ventured to look upwards. The girl was still absorbed in her paper, but on her lap lay now an object which Avenell could have sworn had not previously been there. It was a gold cigarette-case. Even Avenell could not fail to see the significance of this silent appeal, and he conquered his natural shyness manfully.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "but if you wish to smoke, please do."

The girl was a little, ever so little, surprised. But her eyes followed his to the cigarette-case, and she understood.

"Oh, *that*," she said, laughing lightly. "No, I don't smoke. I only carry cards—and one or two little photographs in it. But if *you*——"

"No, thanks. I'm awfully sorry. I thought—— Well, I really am sorry."

She helped him all she could with a smile which even she did not know was quite so devastating.

'It was entirely my own fault. Please don't apologize."

Avenell realized that he had to keep the sacred flame of conversation burning now, or let it fade for ever into everlasting darkness. The prospect of a relapse into dreadful silence terrorized him; terrorized him more even than the probability of a very direct snub. By nature he was a painfully shy man—a man who saw things from the other person's point of view—a man who thought that opportunity did not necessarily make a cad—but an overwhelming impulse gave him to understand that on rare occasions nature needed a helping hand. This was a peculiarly rare occasion.

"You know," he heard himself saying, "a fellow feels a dreadful kind of an ass when he—when he makes a mistake like that. I say, have you any idea how far it is to Rufford?"

"Are you going to Rufford?"

There are, perhaps, purists who will say that a question cannot be a lie. But Barbara Grant will not take side with the purists. She knew that the question was a lie. She knew just about all there was to know about Bruce Avenell, a great deal more probably than that young man had ever troubled to remember about himself. She knew exactly his place in the bowling averages, unerringly his most famous achievements, and precisely the fear in which the best of the county batsmen faced him. She herself had been brought up in the atmosphere of first-class cricket, and the daily picture-papers had made Bruce Avenell's personality as well known to her as if he had been a lifelong friend. And none better than she knew that that day Downshire were playing their Midland rivals, Loamshire, at Rufford.

"Yes. Rufford's my journey's end," said Avenell. "I'm playing cricket there. My team's been touring in the North, but business kept me away. That's how I'm travelling alone. I wonder why they want to play matches in out-of-the-way holes like Rufford?"

"I dare say they appreciate cricket as much at Rufford as they do at—at the Oval," retorted Barbara, a trifle sharply. No one likes to hear one's native place called an out-of-the-way hole.

"I expect they're as keen as they are at Canterbury, but it's a devilish awkward place to get at. Still, I'm awfully glad they chose it."

Barbara was far too sensible, far too practised a hand in the gentle art of flirtation, to appear to doubt his meaning. Her eyes held his for the briefest moment, and the faintest blush delicately stained her cheeks. With a delightful little thrill Avenell realized that the glass was most perceptibly rising.

THE Lady Fate, who on occasions extends a gentle hand to those in worthy need, here smilingly entered into the plot; or it may be that Barbara, unaccustomed to rely on capricious assistance at critical moments, caused the little diversion herself. With fascinated eyes Avenell saw the little collection of articles on her lap, vanity-bag, cigarette-case, and magazine, go slipping in all directions to the floor. And at that very instant the train, with one short whoop of delight, flung itself into the embrace of what, by courtesy, may be called a tunnel.

Avenell's dark head no more than lightly brushed the fair hair of his companion as they simultaneously plunged forward to pick up the scattered goods. His apology could not have been more fervent if their collision had been so violent that it had stunned her. Groping in the dark, their hands met, lingered for the briefest paradise of gentle pressure, and were forgotten in the passion of Avenell's kiss. As the train emerged from the tunnel, scarcely a hundred yards long, Avenell was on the seat beside her, his arm round her waist, his mouth taking full toll from her unresisting lips.

"Oh!" sighed Barbara, when at length she had the opportunity. "Oh!"

"Yes, it was a bit sudden, wasn't it?" agreed Avenell. "I hope—I hope it wasn't too altogether unexpected."

"And we're running into a station," cried Barbara. "And my *hat!* What *will* people think!"

Avenell looked, judicially, at her hat; even to masculine eyes it certainly seemed a good bit crumpled. As has been seen, he was a man of action, and even as the train slowed down by the platform, he pulled down the window-blinds.

"Now," he said, "nobody can see your hat. And if anybody tries to get in this carriage, they'll be severely handled. I wonder what place this is?"

"Only a stupid little country town. By the way, you might pick up my bag, will you? *And* the magazine; I might still read it, even though it has been pretty badly trodden on."

"I say, I'm awfully sorry!"

"Why, for kissing me?"

"No, for treading on your magazine."

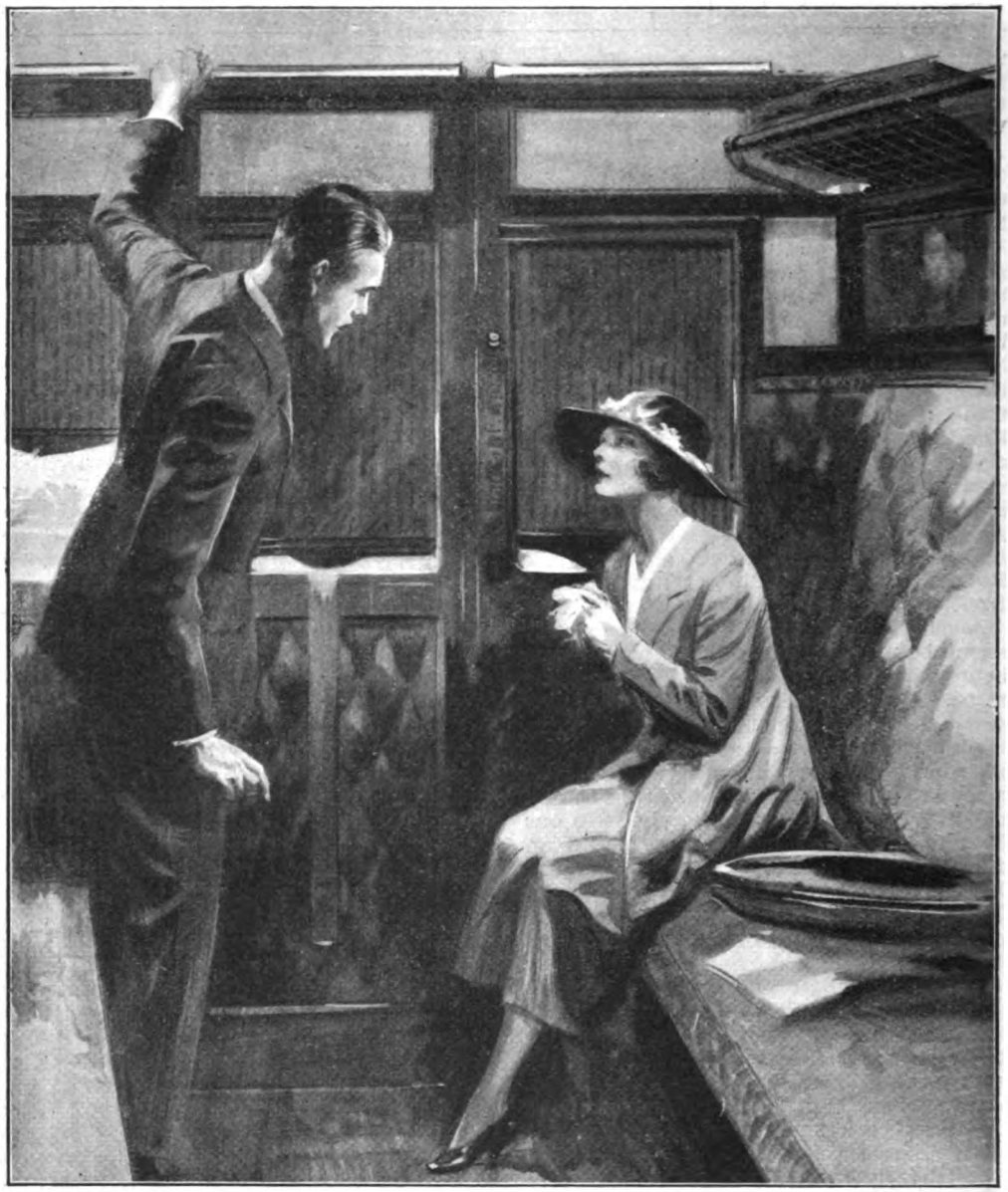
"It's the sort of thing a man would apologize for; it's so apparent that it isn't the nice clean, pretty thing it was a few moments ago. Oh, I know it was my fault!"

Avenell was puzzled, frankly puzzled; he had had no experience in the agility of a girl's emotions.

"Your fault that I kissed you?" he ventured.

"Don't be silly," she answered, savagely. "My fault that the magazine's in tatters. I trod on it more than you did!"

A genuine sigh of relief escaped her as the guard's whistle blew and the train again got into action. It had scarcely drawn clear of the station before Barbara burst into tears. And Avenell recognized, to his dismay, that they were very genuine tears, that he was witnessing the soul-storm of a very repentant girl. Doubtless there were many men who, having caused this most embarrassing situation to occur, could have handled it firmly, and at that moment he would have bartered all his own bright dreams for a magic touch of inspiration.



His hand actually grasping the chain, Avenell paused for a moment and stared downwards.

" I say," he said, trying gently to part the slender fingers pressed so firmly to her face, " you haven't, honestly, done anything really worth while crying about."

Perfectly ineffective—but, at any rate, he had said *something*.

" You'll hate me ! Oh, you'll hate me ! " she sobbed.

Avenell had aged a score of years in the last few minutes, but now his youth rushed back to him in full glory. Her tears had abased and overwhelmed him, but speech, the first sign of returning reason, was the dove let loose from Ararat.

" It seemed all right—till we got—till we got to the station, but—after that—— Oh, what a little cad I've been ! "

Once again he tried to break down the barricade of her hands ; if he could only kiss her, just once. But she shrank from his touch, pressing still more obstinately into the corner, her face averted.

"Do you know—what that station was—which we've just left?" Before he had even time to think she sprang the answer on him: "*Rufford!*."

Avenell sprang to his feet. "Rufford! Where I get out?" he cried.

"I said you'd hate me," sobbed Barbara. "And the next stop's a hundred and thirty miles." She was a brave little girl to let him have it all at once like that.

"Why the dickens——" began Avenell, and then his eyes lightened, and on his lips a little smile was born. "After all, it doesn't much matter." His arm stretched upwards to the communication chain.

"*Don't* do that," said Barbara, very quietly. "For when they come I'll tell them I pulled it—that you frightened me—that you—— Oh, can't you *see* whom they'll believe!"

Drawn to his full height, his hand actually grasping the chain, Avenell paused for a moment and stared downwards. She met his eyes without wavering. Slowly his fingers relaxed their grip, and he sank into his seat. "You have a pretty mind," he said.

"Oh, I've told you I am a little cad," she answered. "But I've begun, and I'm going on. Giving in wouldn't make me forgive myself. And you—you've had your kisses; you needn't squeal at the price."

Avenell winced. There was a measure of rough justice in what she said. Play and pay. It was always the game. Well, he'd played, so he wasn't going to play. Not at Rufford, anyhow, with stumps pitched at twelve and the train scurrying northwards. He wondered what old man Wainwright would say when he tried to explain.

BARBARA'S voice interrupted his reverie. "That last thing I said wasn't fair. I beg your pardon. I'm not usually venomous, but to-day I'm a little worked up. You've every right to squeal. I really wish you would get angry; it would be so much more natural. Just spend the next half-hour telling me exactly what you think of me."

"You might begin to cry again if I did," said Avenell.

Barbara flushed. "You sneer at me for *that*—the only decent, honest thing I've done. Oh, you men are beastly!"

It is to his eternal credit that Avenell laughed; the really sincere, ringing laugh of the sportsman who has lost.

"Look here," he said; "I'll forgive you everything if you'll just tell me *why* you've put yourself to all this bother of trapping me. What difference did it make to you whether I got out at Rufford or not?"

Barbara Grant did not reply.

"Tell me," he said, and his voice was very low and kind, "tell me the whole lot."

"Oh," she burst out, vehemently, "it's all too disgustingly mean for anything. Of course, I recognized you from the very first. I knew who you were, where you were going, and what it would mean to Reggie Grant, of Loamshire. Swear you won't tell Grant, won't you? Promise me! He'd never speak to me again if he knew!" She looked at Avenell in anxious appeal, and he nodded, determined to do nothing to stem the flood of the story. "That's all—surely you can see it all now? The Gentlemen and Players' at Lord's next week—Reggie Grant's a certainty, *almost* a certainty, an *absolute* certainty if he makes a good score to-day. You know what the selectors are—always after the man in form at the moment. Only on Tuesday I heard Reggie say there was but one bowler in England he feared—'that blighter Avenell, of Downshire.' Speaking hard fact, he was, for you bowled him three times last year in county games, and once in the North *v.* South at Scarborough."

"And you're keen on seeing Grant picked for the match at Lord's?"

"Heavens, if I wasn't, if we all weren't, if it wasn't the biggest thing in family history for years, d'you think I should have slid into doing what I did? It was so easy, and I never really thought about it until—until it was all over. I only saw it, at first, like a new kind of game, and I went all out to win. But, really, it was a lot your fault; if you hadn't so—so obviously wanted to be—friendly—the idea would never have occurred to me. You can't say that I led you on!"

"No," admitted Avenell. "You just took advantage of a Heaven-sent opportunity. Shall we let it go at that, and be friends again? I promise to forgive you absolutely if you'll just tell me what Grant is to you that you should be so anxious about him."

For the second time that morning Barbara's gloved hands eclipsed her face; in an agony lest there should be a recurrence of tears, Avenell cursed himself for asking foolish questions. He did not know that, safe behind their slender shutters, merry eyes were mocking him.

"I'm—I'm his wife," said Barbara, faintly.

The world went upside down for Avenell as he heard; there was no world, nothing and nobody but one great, clumsy cad—himself. Tragedy's sable curtain dropped heavily and completely upon the little harlequinade. No realization that love's young dream was shattered caused distress to him. Love did not die, for love had not been born. But honour died. A pal's wife! Healthy in mind as he was in body, Avenell felt, with the heroic exaggeration of youth,

the shame of it. Cricket is a white man's game—and he'd have to look Reggie Grant in the face and shake hands with him. Avenell shivered; somebody *was* walking over his grave.

THE train slowed down, the noise of brakes woke Avenell from his bitter reverie. He gathered up his bag and got out, raising his hat mechanically to Barbara as he did so. Further than that he took no notice of her.

In a quarter of an hour he was in telephonic communication with Wainwright, the captain of Downshire. In another ten minutes a splendid Daimler was being backed out of the biggest garage in the town. Avenell was dazed, but he was obeying the primal instinct, the homing instinct. The cricket-field was home to him, the cricket-field where his side was playing.

The Daimler was ready, drawn up by the kerb. He was just getting in when a light hand fell upon his sleeve.

"Please, I've got to get to Rufford too. And I've no money," said Barbara.

If she had been a man, Avenell would have knocked her down. She was a girl, so he stepped aside, and, climbing in, she nestled snugly in the corner.

"Thanks," she said. "You know, you are a bit of a sportsman, Mr. Avenell."

He made no reply. Mile after mile fled by in absolute silence. Still absorbed entirely in his own thoughts, Barbara did not exist to him. And she was quite content, glad even that he took it so. A white little girl herself, she would have hated him if he had taken it otherwise. And she did not want to hate him; she did not want him to hate her—always.

Almost an hour had passed before the silence was broken. Then Barbara could not restrain her inquisitiveness any longer. Avenell had knowledge which she had not. It was unfair.

"Who are in?" she asked, abruptly.

"We are. And we shall bat all day." He could not conceal the note of triumph. More than that, though he struggled hard, for quite several moments, not to make the obvious quotation, the desire to gloat proved irresistible. "The best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley," he grunted.

"It's nice of you only to call me a mouse," said Barbara.

But Avenell was not to be drawn; common courtesy had compelled him to offer a seat in the car to the girl who had so terribly caused him to break the code about other people's wives, but there was no call upon him to entertain her. He had done enough of that in the train! Banked clouds of trouble lay ahead of him, and his heart was heavy. The

The stumps crashed, and slip made a brilliant catch of the spinning bail. But a no-ball had saved the batsman once again.

best part of an hour passed before he so much as looked at her. She was asleep. Evidently Conscience was a particularly well-trained servant of Barbara Grant's!

She woke just as the car was making the long, straggling High Street, which is the principal feature of Rufford. Her hand on Avenell's sleeve claimed his attention.

"I think I'll get down here, please," she requested. "If we drove up to the ground together it would look rather—strange." Avenell signalled to the chauffeur. "And thanks for *such* a pleasant journey," remarked Barbara, as she waved him good-bye.

DOWNSHIRE had made two hundred and eighty for seven wickets, their crack bowler discovered, as his eyes anxiously sought the score-board. He was always tenth man in, so no harm at all had occurred to his side through Barbara's little plot. There remained, however, the personal stain of it, and Avenell felt a hundred per cent. a criminal as he thrust his way towards Wainwright (who, having made a very jolly fifty-seven, was at ease with the world) and apologized for the lateness of his arrival.

"Awfully sorry; got held up badly, as I telephoned."

"Doesn't matter a bit, old son," boomed Wainwright. "You're in fine time to bundle 'em out to-morrow. Have a drink. Hallo, Buswell's bowled! We might get a wicket or two off 'em to-night. Buck up and change."

Downshire were out for three hundred and fifteen, a couple of fours being Avenell's bag before mid-off hung bravely on to a full-hearted punch. A bare twenty minutes remained for play as Wainwright's little white-clad company clustered through the gate and deployed, leisurely and laughingly, to their various positions on the field.

Avenell found himself waiting with intense interest to see who would first emerge from the pavilion to bat for Loamshire. He wondered if Grant would have the pluck, seeing how much success meant to him, to come out for that supremely dangerous twenty minutes. So many of our leading batsmen prefer, very wisely, to leave it to the morrow, to offer up as a sacrifice somebody else's wicket to preserve their own. A man danced down the pavilion steps. It was Grant, and Avenell's sportsman's heart went out to him. The man was good goods, anyhow, whatever Barbara might be. His thoughts were interrupted by Wainwright.

"If we get this fellow out to-night, Avenell, it'll save us the devil of a lot of trouble to-morrow. Sling in some of your best, old man."

The first two or three overs brought cricket of the usual late-afternoon kind; the steadiest of batting against eager bowling. No fireworks, a casual run here and there, with the spectators slowly dwindling, enthusiasts going happily home with the prospect of a full day's batting by the home team on the morrow. Two more overs and stumps would be pulled, and the chance of a wicket falling had dwindled almost to extinction. No excitement, merely the placid get-the-job-over air about everything.

Avenell at deep third man watched Grant patiently pushing ball after ball along the ground to mid-off, and the almost mechanical triangular journey of the ball—bowler to batsman, batsman to mid-off, mid-off to bowler—became so monotonous that it seemed nothing else could happen till the end of Time. Strange chap, Grant, a bit young to be married, he found himself thinking; probably jolly well off, though, lucky dog; only about twenty-four, he supposed; still,

three or four years older than Barbara. Fancy that kid being his wife! Oughtn't to be allowed, flappers running about and collaring——

Avenell distinctly heard the gasp of surprise from the hundred or so members still remaining in the pavilion behind him. He woke up. What had happened? Heavens, almost on top of him the ball in a spiral spin was dropping into his hands! But where *were* his hands? Up all right, level with his face, yes, but nowhere on the line of that cursedly-swerving ball. He made a final frantic effort to focus the thing, took a fatal half-step forward, blundered beyond repair.

Unperturbed, the umpires changed positions for the last over of the day, the wicket-keeper waddled clumsily down the pitch, and Wainwright muttered the conventional "Hard luck, Avenell!" They had all seen catches dropped before. A confounded nuisance, of course, but all in the day's work.

Only to Avenell was the supreme tragedy; even as the ball lay dead at his feet, he saw in it the image of Barbara's mocking face. The kid had triumphed. Not once in a thousand times could he have dropped that catch, but a mind which should have been concentrated on the game had been stolen at the all-important moment by the girl who had laughed at him all day. That he had dropped the catch was nothing; that *she* should have been the direct cause of his dropping it was the agony unable to be borne.

They were waiting for him to bowl the last over; he picked up the ball, and strode to his position. Suddenly he noticed that Grant was the batsman facing him. So they had run while he was dropping the catch? He had, then, just a chance to get even; *six* chances of crying quits. He tore down to the wicket, flung down a ball with the whole of his hate behind it. Grant pecked at it, hopelessly at sea, and a bare inch from the off stump the ball went flying by. Grimly he set about his second delivery, and almost perfectly the result was the same. Grant looked up, amazed; for three consecutive balls nothing but sheer blind luck had saved him. Avenell's third ball whizzed by, scarcely letting daylight in between it and the top of the bails. The wicket-keeper, already standing deep, moved back a further yard, grinning. *He* knew; he had kept for thirteen years, and he wanted to keep for a few more yet. The fourth and the fifth ball played around the stumps like bullets from the gun of a performing cowboy improving on the showmanship of William Tell.

One more ball. The stumps crashed, and slip made a brilliant catch of the spinning bail. But in time with the music of the splintering wood came the umpire's sturdy call. A no-ball, a foot dragged too soon across the line, had saved the batsman once again. Avenell was done; he had no strength, no heart, for another effort, and the easy ball he offered up for the extra delivery was the only one that Grant had properly sighted in the whole over. The batsman breathed a sigh of gratitude that the ordeal was over for the day and turned happily for the pavilion.

He was waiting for Avenell as the latter came up the steps, hand outstretched in frankest admiration.

"A man never had such vile luck in his life! Six absolute beauties, and I never saw one of them. Awfully sorry, Avenell, I didn't see you at lunch, but you've got to come home with me. Put you up for the match, you know. Wainwright's coming, and Foster."

Avenell, unprepared, flushed.

"I say, you know, that's awfully good of you, but—I can't. Honestly I can't. It's absolutely impossible!"

"Rot, old man! Nothing's so impossible in this dull old town as the hotel accommodation! Besides, you'll bust up the bridge four if you back out. He's simply got to come, hasn't he, Babs?"

"Why, of course you must come, Mr. Avenell," said a well-remembered voice immediately behind him. "Reggie will be terribly disappointed if you don't. And so shall I!"

"That's settled it," cried Grant, triumphantly. "Everybody does what Babs tells 'em to. Don't be too long changing. there's a good chap."

DINNER was over, billiards was over, and the fourth and final rubber was being buried with grand slam pomp. The four men had been left to themselves the whole evening; even the dinner itself had been a bachelor party, for, Grant explained, his mother was a little unwell, and was dining in her room, with Babs to keep her company. His invariable habit of referring to her as "Babs" annoyed Avenell considerably; it was such a ridiculous diminutive of a very attractive name, and so absurdly inappropriate. There was nothing of the Babs about Barbara!

"And that's that," said their host, proceeding to tot up. "Five-forty-eight, I make it, about a hundred more than we shall score to-morrow. Thirteen and ninepence, Avenell, please. You've paid for your bed and breakfast! One more drink, and to bed, you chaps!"

They trooped upstairs, and of the four Avenell was the most tired and the least sleepy. As soon as his head touched the pillow he knew what his fate was to be: the old story of mental liveliness an easy winner

"Am I forgiven?" He had not the least idea that Barbara was near him till she spoke.

against bodily fatigue. The vividest little pictures of Avenell making a fool of himself jazzed before his eyes: Avenell kissing his host's wife, Avenell dropping a sitter, Avenell with asses' ears, soon to get affrightingly mixed up with Avenell dropping Barbara out of trains and every possible and impossible juggle of the day's contorted events.

There wasn't a shadow of doubt; Avenell was "for it." After perhaps half an hour's struggle against the inevitable he admitted defeat. Jumping out of bed he flung on a dressing-gown and lit a cigarette. French windows opened on to a veranda that ran the full length of the face of the house. At intervals low railings divided the veranda into sections, with the result that the occupant of each bedroom had so much space in which to do sentry-go, should he desire it. It was a wonderful, warm moonlight night, and sleepless Avenell desired it.

For some while he paced up and down his strip of veranda, not quite the length of a cricket pitch, he found. Then he sat down on the little railing. He discovered that he had only two cigarettes left. If he had to think without smoking—— Still, it was better to think out here, in the sane air, than in that infernal Grand Guignol bed.

Ought he to tell Grant? Dash it, it wasn't done, to kiss and tell! But shaking his hand, eating his meat, playing the friend, that wasn't done either! Only such a kid of a girl, too.

Slippered feet make no noise. How long she had been there Avenell to this day does not know. Clever men sense the presence of women they—almost—love in a hundred ways; oh, yes, it's wonderful how they're always right. But Avenell was a common get-on-with-the-job sort of guy, pure psycho-neuter and normal. He had not the least idea that Barbara was near him, was almost touching him, till she spoke.

"Am I forgiven?"

Shock tactics more often than not succeed. If Avenell had had notice of that question, he might, he almost certainly would, have made a hash of his answer. But he had no time to think; stumbling clumsily off his uncomfortable seat he turned to see Barbara before him, her right hand holding the folds of her kimono across her breast, her left extended towards him.

There was only one possible answer in sight; thought was beyond him. He took the extended hand, kissed it, maybe a little theatrically, certainly a trifle passionately, with lips that had known other delights.

"I *knew* you wouldn't be able to sleep," she said, and with that she was gone.

Bed was a different haven to Avenell then; bed, as he bathed in it, was all what it had never been. Reason knows not why, but Avenell, an ordinary chap, like Cupid knew no logic. He had forgiven and was so forgiven. Give it up, argue if you like, but it's true. And just before sleep claimed him, "Damn!" cried Avenell, for a small piece of very solid evidence had forced itself on his mind. Barbara had known that it would.

Men are mites in such matters. But even Avenell was bound, at some time or another, to realize that the hand that he had kissed, the left hand, was entirely unencumbered by a ring!

ONE of the arts a woman specializes in is that of not being seen when it is contrary to her plans; the missing link almost certainly was a female of the species. Consequently, neither speech, sight, nor message of Barbara did Avenell have until the first over—Owton's—had been bowled next morning, when Dean, the groundsman, shuffled on to the field and handed Avenell, carefully measuring his bowling run, a note.

It was brief. "*Bowl him first ball, for my sake. Barbara.*" Conscience had at last got to grips with Barbara Grant.

And with a grin Avenell remembered what Grant had said the evening before: "Everybody does what Babs tells 'em to." Grant was going to prove himself a true prophet.

The ball sang down the pitch, a bare inch beyond Grant's reach, whipped in a bit, kept low, and completely spoiled the mass formation of three very beautifully polished stumps. Avenell was quits with the world.

Five had fallen for a hundred and eight as they came in to lunch. Downshire were very decidedly on top, but that wasn't the reason of Avenell's eager, delighted stride. He didn't care a terrible lot about lunch either; bigger things were on hand. Three-quarters of an hour is not an eternity, but the fate of eternity was to be decided in that forty-five minutes.

He found her, and took her away. Only twenty-one players (and two umpires; oh, yes, umpires eat) sat down to lunch that morning in the pavilion. Avenell was the absentee, engaged on important business elsewhere.

"I understand everything," he was telling her. "Everything. Temptation, impulse, no time to think, your regret, everything. But *why* that *wife* business? *That* was what worried me, and I can't understand the need for it."

Barbara was very happy. "There are some little touches a man can't understand," she said. "If you—if you hadn't been the—the sportsman you are, it would have been a very pretty touch; a very pretty touch indeed."

"Honest to goodness, I can't think of the good of it."

A little white ungloved hand gripped fingers stained by many a sun.

"You wouldn't," said Barbara, gently, "you're too white. But just guess a bit. I was all fed up with being cheap, with kisses given for foolish gain. I didn't want any more—like that. I didn't want any more at all, unless you found out and forgave. And there was a long way to go and a long way to come back, wasn't there? Again, *if* you happened to be a fellow who—who gloats—well, it wasn't likely you'd tell the tale that you'd been led astray by Reggie Grant's *wife*, was it? The laugh would have been on you when people said Reggie had no wife, wouldn't it? But his sister! Flappers do, sometimes, that sort of thing; they'd have believed the truth then, and I—I think Reggie would have flogged me! When you've done something desperate you have to do something drastic, and——"

"And you did it!" said Avenell. "It's just what I'm going to do now! Fancy wasting all those glorious hours yesterday afternoon in the car!"

JUST before the tea interval the last Loamshire man tipped a catch into the slips, and Avenell had taken six for seventy-three. Reggie Grant came out to meet him, a telegram in his hand.

"One for you, Avenell, old son," he exclaimed. "And there's one for me, too. We're both to play at Lord's next week. I thought you'd cooked my chance when you bowled me this morning, but 'not out, seven' last night must have convinced 'em I'm the devil of a bat. Congrats, old man, and you'll be the best man at Lord's."

"And you at St. Philip's very shortly," said Avenell, with a grin. "Did Barbara happen to mention anything about it?"

WIRELESS UP-TO-DATE

BY

R.W.Hallows

We are indebted to the Marconi Scientific Instrument Co., Ltd., for assistance in the preparation of this article and for the loan of the apparatus used.

WHENEVER a craze for any particular form of diversion seizes America, it does so pretty thoroughly. Wireless telephony has been the rage there for some time, and the whole country from end to end is filled with what they are pleased to call "radio fans" or "radio bugs," which expressions being interpreted signify enthusiastic owners or would-be owners of wireless receiving sets. We shall soon have them in this country, but let us hope with other names! In the United States alone of all the lands of the world, wireless telephony has been given a chance to develop freely during the last four years.

Naturally, although we are now making a beginning, they are still some way ahead of us, for they had a long start. There were, for example, no fewer than fifteen thousand licensed transmitting stations in the States before the restrictions in this country were relaxed; and a regular system of concerts, news services, home talks for women, weather forecasts, and lectures of general interest had been in operation for some time. Settlers in the wilds keep in touch with all that is going on in the distant world of civilization by means of the wireless telephone; farmers living far out on the plains know the exact price that wheat is fetching in the markets; the sick have the religious services of their own faith flashed through ether to their bedsides on Sundays; business men away for holidays can maintain constant connection between themselves and their offices, if they wish to do so; and thousands of tired workers listen nightly to the splendid concerts that are broadcasted from the great stations.

The Radio Robert's sleeve-receiver.

Before we are many months older the wireless telephone will be just as widely used in our own country. Our new broadcasting stations are allowed to use considerably more than a horse-power for sending, which means that the simplest and cheapest receiving sets can be used to catch their messages. Wireless telephony is now within the reach of everyone, for a perfectly good set that will give excellent results at moderate ranges can be made for an outlay of a couple of pounds, or bought complete for about double that sum.

The wireless doctor hears from his dispensary.

The pictures which illustrate this article are peeps into the near future. They are not mere freaks of the imagination: every one of the photographs shows a means of employing wireless telephony that is already not only possible, but in actual use in the United States.

Look at the photograph of the "wireless policeman" of the future. His aerial consists of wires concealed beneath his tunic; the earth-wire runs down his leg to the iron-shod heel of his boot—and it must be admitted that a policeman's boot makes ample contact with the ground! Upon his sleeve is pinned a buzzer, which, actuated by the radio-receiving circuits, emits a singing note to attract his attention when he is wanted by headquarters. The rest of the apparatus is so small that it can be carried with ease either in his pockets or in a small pouch upon his belt. Fitted out in this way, Robert will become even more useful than he has been in the past, for when his presence is required in any quarter he will be able to receive a message in a flash. If, for instance, there is an outbreak of rowdyism a hundred "Radio Roberts" can be told instantly just where to go, and their sturdy forms will appear from all sides in time to move on the offenders before they can do any serious damage.

The "wireless doctor" is another feature of the new age. You will notice that the aerial consists of a wire running round the top of his car. As he is speeding along from one house to another, the receiver placed near his ear suddenly begins to talk. "Dr. Jones, Dr. Jones, Dr. Jones," it calls. There comes a short pause; then: "Accident in Bridge Road," or "Urgent case, Mr. Smith of 14, High Street." Such particulars as are known are given to the doctor, who makes his way without delay to the place where his aid is required. He may also send messages from time to time to his house to order the dispatch of medicines to urgent cases, or to the hospital to summon a nurse if her services are required without delay. Many a man and woman may owe their lives in future years to the saving of time effected by the doctor's wireless telephone.

The wireless-fitted car will also be of the greatest use to the business man who is obliged to make journeys to outlying places. To-day he has always the haunting fear that in his absence some question of vital importance may arise which needs an immediate answer. With the wireless telephone installed in the car he need no longer be nervous, for should anything occur with which he alone can deal, his office can get into touch with him at once.

Firemen, too, will find such a set invaluable upon the engine, for if on reaching the scene of the outbreak they find that further assistance is needed, a call can be sent in a tiny fraction of a second to the station.

And what of the "wireless parson"—a sky-pilot indeed!—who is enabled by the radio set to send out his message to a scattered flock who would otherwise be unable to hear service and sermon? Even in this thickly populated country there are great numbers of people who live so far from the church or chapel of their own denomination that it is impossible for them to attend except on rare occasions; and there are invalids everywhere who miss sadly the Sunday services to which they

cannot go. The wireless telephone brings to every one of them the service with its music, and the words of the sermon, which are heard as distinctly as if the preacher were only a few yards away. Services of this kind are conducted every week in America by the central organizations of the various Churches. Beautiful music is provided and the best of preachers are selected. With us the number of any popular clergyman's congregation is still limited by the size of his church, but in the new wireless age he will be able to preach to ten thousand people as easily as to a hundred, in fact more easily, for in speaking on the wireless telephone the voice need not be raised beyond its ordinary conversational tone. Should he not possess a sending set of his own, connection by ordinary telephone to a broadcasting station could be made to serve the same purpose.

So far we have considered chiefly those who will use transmitting sets. What will be the benefits conferred by wireless upon the ordinary household which has only a receiving apparatus? Look at the picture of the kiddies clustered round the loud-sounding horn and you will see one of them. Every morning they read in the children's column of the paper about the doings of "Uncle Bill's" pets. In the evening when they are ready for bed Uncle Bill himself *talks* to them, weaving delightful fairy tales or telling nonsense stories that keep them rocking with laughter. Then the pets are sure to join in with little messages. Just fancy what it will mean to hear the voices of the people of the children's corner; and think of the thrills of a fairy story that comes through space from the lips of a speaker who is perhaps two hundred miles away! When Uncle Bill finally says "good night," they trot off blissfully happy to dream of all the wonderful things that he has told them.

A form of wireless entertainment that appeals to the whole family is the concert which the waves will bring into every one's home. A good receiver gives out every note with perfect clearness and excellent tone, especially if the head telephones are used. The loud-speaking attachment, though it answers well for orchestral pieces and will often give quite good results for instrumental solos, is still not capable of bringing out the

The jolliest hour of the day—wireless bedtime stories.

Dancing to music flashed through the ether.

full beauty of the master-singer's golden notes. We are not dependent only upon our own broadcasting stations for wireless music, for those who have sensitive sets can "listen-in" on the concerts which are transmitted regularly from The Hague, and from the great Eiffel Tower station at Paris. To anyone who is musical the wireless telephone will be an endless source of joy, since every evening will provide him a feast of glorious sound. Imagine the joys of "listening-in" to a Sunday afternoon concert from the seclusion of one's own garden.

It will not be long before some enterprising hostess of the new age sends out dance cards on which appears the magic word "wireless." Here indeed is an idea for anyone who wishes to give an entertainment that is quite out of the ordinary. Arrangements are made with one of the area stations to transmit a suitable programme of dance music. As the guests arrive they notice the bright lights of a valve-set shining in one corner of the room. The host is engaged for a minute or two in making final tuning adjustments; then suddenly he turns over a switch which brings the loud-sounding horn into action, and next moment couples are fox-trotting gaily to strains played by an orchestra miles away. Jazz,

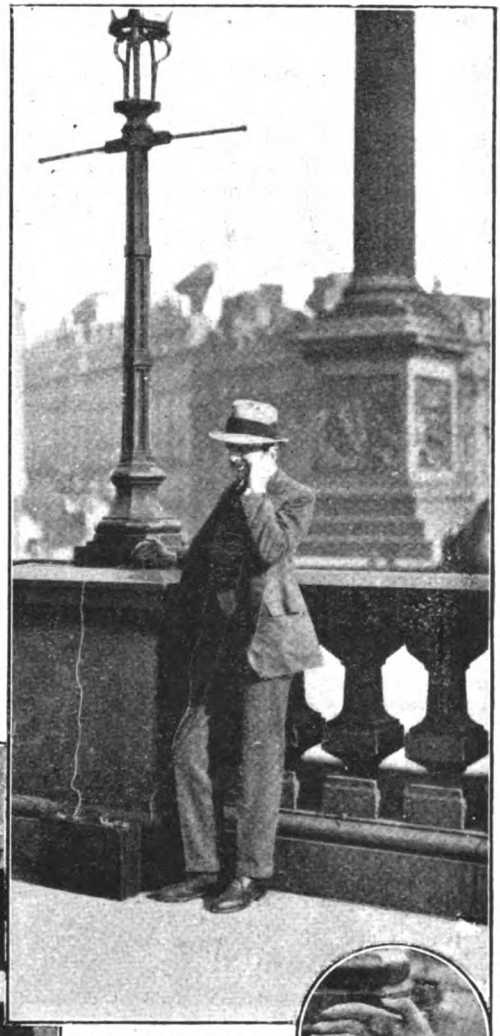
Listening in the garden to a wireless concert.

two-step, and waltz follow each other at intervals, and at supper-time the horn, transported to the dining-room, gives jolly selections from one of Gilbert and Sullivan's operas, or from the latest musical comedy.

These are merely a few of the family uses of the wireless telephone receiver. It is an instrument which can be employed in a thousand ways to interest and entertain the household. The broadcasted news service, for instance, as it develops will be to the home what the "tape" is to the club. Paterfamilias and the boys need no longer wonder impatiently how Surrey is faring against Yorkshire; the fall of the wickets, changes in the bowling, and all other important incidents of the match will be known to them as soon as they happen. The head of the house will never of course admit that he has little flutters on the race-course, but if you watch his expression as the wireless 'phone announces the result of the St. Leger you will find it easy to discover whether he has backed the winner or a loser.

As soon as the newspapers begin to make as full use of wireless as they do in America materfamilias and the girls will always be found near the receiver when "Fifi" or "Mélisande" of the ladies' page is due to give one of her little talks on the fashions of the day—and, if possible, of the next day! Then there will be chats on cookery and on housekeeping in general that will go straight to every woman's heart.

The lady reporter's garter-receiver keeps her in touch with the office.



Hearing the news in Trafalgar Square.

The ring that makes the earth connection.

The wireless set need not be confined to the comparatively large one that is fixed in the house. We have already seen how the policeman and the doctor can be fitted out with light portable sets, and these are by no means the only possibilities. A complete wireless receiving set has been made that fits into a ring. It is naturally a very tiny affair—it is

actually five-eighths of an inch wide and less than half an inch thick—and its range is, of course, limited; still, for short-distance work it is remarkably efficient. Other sets have been made in razor-boxes, fountain-pen cases, and match-boxes. The last is a very ingenious affair, tuning being effected by moving the inside of the box to and fro. One very neat little appliance looks just like a well-bound book. On each cover is mounted a "pancake" coil, and as their distance apart can be varied by opening the "book" more or less widely, very effective tuning is obtained. The detector—that is, the apparatus which filters out the unwanted portions of the ether waves—is contained in a little tube, resembling the case of a clinical thermometer, which fits into the binding. Perhaps the most wonderful of the small outfits is the *valve* set designed by an English expert which fits into a cigar-box.

What would be handier than the little receiver adopted by one lady reporter? The whole thing is in the form of a very smart garter. Round a cardboard foundation is wound the wire that makes the coil, and attached to the garter itself is one of those little spring eye-glass chains that automatically coil themselves back into their cases when released. This chain is attached, when the set is in use, to the sole of the lady's shoe; whilst another wire, considerably longer, runs up to her hat, the frame of which makes an admirable aerial. The telephone receiver is carried in her vanity-bag and can be fixed on in a moment when it is wanted. By means of this little contrivance she is able to receive instructions from the news editor whilst she is reporting at some distance from the office.

The man who is seen in Trafalgar Square, with a telephone receiver to his ear, is not touching the lamp-post to see whether the paint really is wet. He is making an earth connection by means of a ring on his finger, to which is attached a wire that runs down to his attaché-case, which contains the receiving apparatus. A light coil wound round his waist serves as the aerial.

The "bookie" in the last photograph seems at first sight to be rather foolish in sheltering under an umbrella when it is not raining. But there is method in his apparent madness. The "gamp" is there to protect not his body but his pocket. The wires of its frame make an excellent aerial for the tiny detector set attached to his ring. A small tuning coil is carried in his sleeve. Being rather short-sighted, he finds it a little difficult to read the signals of the "tic-tac" men, and the wireless telephone provides him with a quicker and more reliable way of keeping pace with the fluctuations of the market.

The "bookie"—the wires of whose umbrella make an excellent aerial—always knows the market.

We have reached the wireless age at last in this country. It has taken us a considerable time to do so, but we have really lost nothing by that. Receiving sets to-day are cheaper and much better designed than they were even two years ago, and the thousands of amateurs who are now taking up wireless all over the country will start far better equipped than would have been the case had the Government's restrictions been removed at an earlier date.

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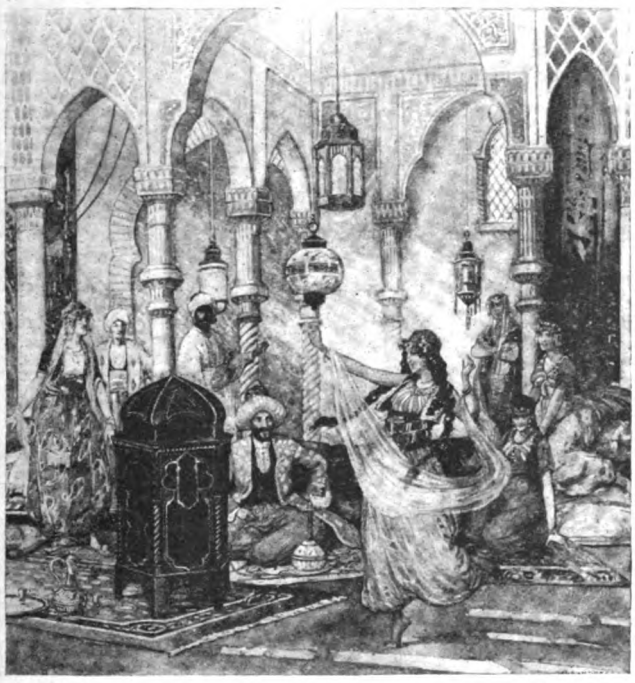

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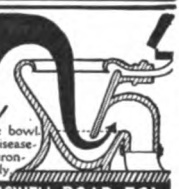

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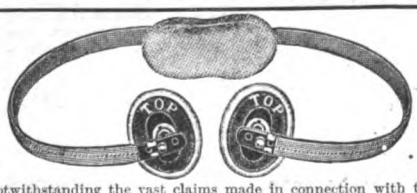

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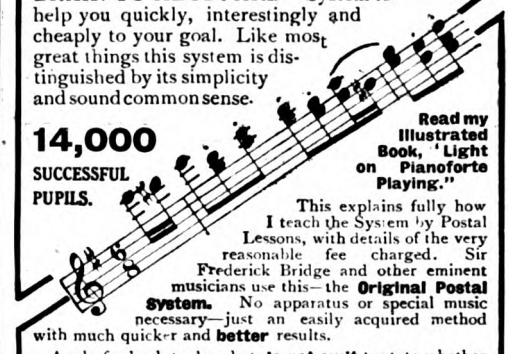

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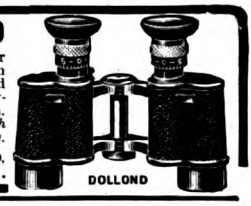

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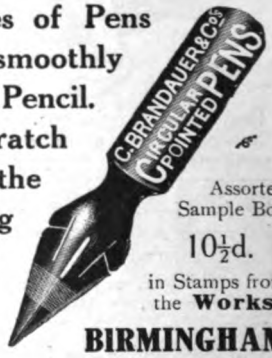

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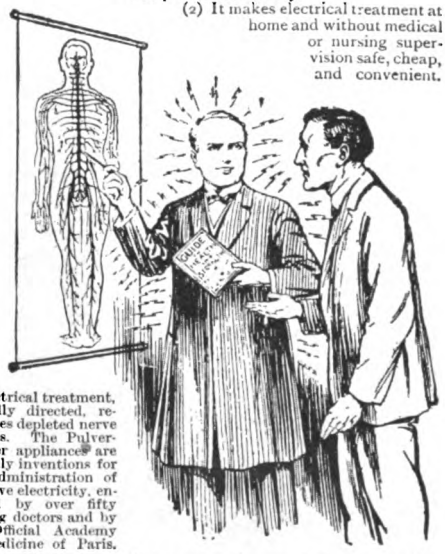

Electrical treatment, skilfully directed, revitalises depleted nerve centres. The Pulvermacher appliances are the only inventions for the administration of curative electricity, endorsed by over fifty leading doctors and by the Official Academy of Medicine of Paris.

(3) It is the most perfect way yet discovered of applying electricity for the relief of pain and cure of illness.

(4) It is superior to all medication—drugs containing no vital power in themselves, while electricity possesses power in itself transferable to the human system.

(5) It gives no shock to the system, and is followed by no violent reaction.

(6) It is Nature's own stimulant for every weak and enfeebled organ and every flagging function.

REVITALISES DEPLETED NERVE CENTRES.

The greatest neurologists, including Erb, Beard, Loeb, and hundreds of the foremost medical thinkers, now agree that electrical treatment, skilfully and scientifically directed, will revitalise depleted nerve centres (as in neurasthenia, debility, and nervous dyspepsia), restore sound digestion, invigorate the circulation, and increase the daily and necessary elimination of the waste products that, if uneliminated, are the greatest source of all diseases.

OVERWHELMING MEDICAL EVIDENCE.

In a most interesting little book entitled "A Guide to Health and Strength," which every sufferer from neurasthenia, indigestion, liver or kidney troubles, rheumatism and gout, anæmia, heart weakness, insomnia, and indeed any nervous or functional disorder should get and read, not the least interesting feature is the convincing and overwhelming mass of medical and scientific evidence supporting the methods employed in the Pulvermacher Electrological Treatment.

This fascinating and helpful little book will gladly be sent to anyone interested. Simply send a post card requesting a free copy to the **Superintendent, Pulvermacher Electrological Institute, 56, Vulcan House, 56, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.**

We invite you, if you possibly can, to call and, without any obligation, examine the Pulvermacher Appliances, when free advice and demonstrations will be given by the Head Superintendent, between the hours of 9.30 and 5.

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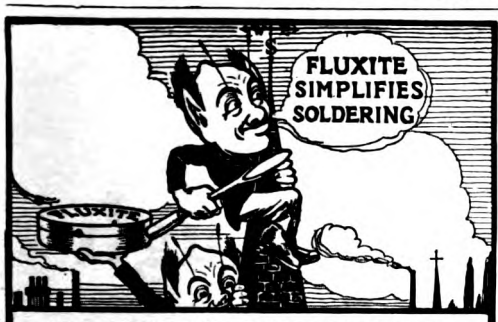

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All Mechanics WILL have

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SIMPLIFIES SOLDERING

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It is perfectly simple to use, and will last for years in constant use. It contains a special "small-space" Soldering Iron, with non-heating metal handle, a Pocket Blow-Lamp, FLUXITE, Solder, etc., and full instructions.

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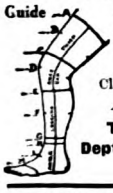
Varivane Supports are made of **unshrinkable** material, are economical, cool, comfortable, and convenient; they are not ready-made articles, but made **strictly to measure.**

How to Measure: Give number of inches round leg at points A, B, and C for Thigh; C, D, and E for Knee; E, F, and G for Calf, and H, L, and M for Ankle. Take the measurements over the bare skin.



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I offer a genuine guaranteed Remedy for tobacco or snuff habit. It is mild, pleasant, strengthening. For either sex. **Overcome that peculiar nervousness and craving for cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, or snuff. It is unsafe and torturing** to attempt to rid yourself of tobacco or snuff habit by suddenly stopping by will power; don't do it. The correct method is to **eliminate the nicotine poison** from the system, strengthen the weakened, irritated membranes and nerves, and genuinely overcome the craving. You can give up tobacco and enjoy yourself a thousand times better, while feeling always in robust health. My FREE book tells about the **wonderful three days' method.** Legions of testimonials. Inexpensive, reliable. **Book on Tobacco and Snuff Habit,** sent in plain wrappers, FREE on request. Write to-day. Address—**EDWARD J. WOODS, Ltd., 167, Strand 353 T.D.D., LONDON, W.C.2.**

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"I have not been troubled with the Constipation for the last 2 months,

and that without adopting any special diet. When I took up the course **I was sceptical, as I had been troubled with this complaint since youth."**

The above extract from an unsolicited testimonial sent by a gentleman of 41 years of age, is further proof that

MAXALDING

is the only *real* and *lasting* Cure for Constipation.

Write to me personally.

Drugs do not cure, but liquefy the already fermented matter; pass it suddenly, and then constipate again. **This is not cure.**

This drugging enfeebles the muscular wall of the intestine, and spoils the peristalsis or wave-like action which should be maintained throughout life, if health and fitness are to be maintained likewise. Unless this peristalsis is encouraged to do its own work, the interior wall of the intestine remains coated with fermented poisons, for the drugs will not remove them. In some persons this condition of poisoning is maintained for years, and is shown in coated tongue, foul breath, lassitude, headache, bowel-flatulence, muddy complexion, which contribute towards bad health in its very worst form.

STOP TAKING DRUGS NOW, and through MAXALDING BY CORRESPONDENCE, secure and retain a condition of **health and fitness** comprehended in the further extracts from letters received by every post from gratified patients and pupils, and of which I hold thousands:—

Age 51. "I desired to be **relieved from Constipation,** from which I had suffered for many years. **This result has been achieved.** There is a marked improvement in general health, and **even the muscular development is noticeable.** The claims you make appear to be justified."

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A FREE DIAGNOSIS and explanatory Booklet will be sent Gratis and Post Free to any part of the world. Kindly send details of your case by letter or by underlining your requirements on the coupon.

I desire to eradicate Constipation, Indigestion, Neurasthenia, Nervous Debility, Lack of Energy, Lack of Self-Confidence, Lung Weakness, Susceptibility to Colds, Sluggish Liver, Depression, Languor, Emaciation, Thinness, Obesity, or

I desire to develop great nerve control and vitality.
I desire to secure great strength and endurance.
I desire to develop great speed for sports.

Name .....

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How to Make a Policeman Laugh

A RECIPE BY

BARRY PAIN

ONE YOUNG MAN TRIED TO DO IT FOR A WAGER, BUT HE DIDN'T KNOW BARRY PAIN'S RECIPE. THAT YOUNG MAN EMERGED FROM PRISON RUINED IN REPUTATION AND BROKEN IN SPIRIT. HE WAS NEVER SEEN TO SMILE AGAIN, AND IS NOW THE EDITOR OF "HEARTY LAUGHS."

BARRY PAIN TELLS YOU ALL ABOUT THIS UNFORTUNATE YOUNG MAN IN THE JULY

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ON SALE JULY 1st. PRICE 1/-

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Experienced pipe smokers recognise by sight, scent and taste the presence of the Eastern Tobaccos in CHAIRMAN. They are there in no mean proportion; and they are there for a very real purpose. *They improve the smoking.* No tobacco without them is so sweet, so cool, or has so pleasant an aroma. Most pipe tobaccos do not contain them as they are costly. However good such tobaccos may be otherwise, they fall short in some degree in these three qualities—sweetness, coolness, and aroma.

Sweetness is an essential of complete enjoyment; coolness is necessary as one cannot persistently burn the tongue to please the palate; and a pleasant aroma makes its own appeal and is shared and appreciated by others.

The reason of CHAIRMAN is evidenced in its smoking. To the fine and robust qualities of Virginian leaf it adds the requisite finish—the artist's touch. It lifts the good but ordinary to the best possible. . . . . It is a tobacco without a peer.

CHAIRMAN is medium in strength and suits most men: BOARDMAN'S is the same blend but milder, and RECORDER the same but fuller in flavour.

All packed in 1 and 2 oz. lead packets and ¼ and ½-lb. tins, and sold at 1/1 per oz. by all good-class tobacconists.

R. J. LEA, Ltd., Reddish, STOCKPORT.

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Smart, Fresh Shades which Charm the Eye.

TWINK appeals to every feminine mind, young or old; all appreciate the dainty freshness that Twink gives to the materials it dyes.

Twink will renew your faded frocks of last year. Blouses, jumpers, sports coats are made like new with these bright dye flakes. Then curtains, cushion covers, table-cloths and chintzes can all be made bright and fresh with Twink.

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Navy Blue	*Tabac Brown*	*Grey*
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PRICE $7\frac{1}{2}$d. PER PACKET.

Of all Chemists, Grocers, Stores, Oilmen, Chandlers, etc.

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HAVE YOU HEARD THE TWINK DANCE MUSIC?

Comprising the latest Fox Trot and Waltz, together with an excellent Parade March.

Price **6d.** per copy. Post free **7½d.**

Orchestral parts loaned on request.

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HOLIDAY FICTION NUMBER

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

SPLENDID LOVE STORY BY "SAPPER"

AUG. 1/- net.

Hello! Hello!!

Hello, is that Sir Kreemy Knut?
Well, this is Pip and Jeff and Mutt.
We've run right out of Sharp's, I fear;
So will you be a perfect dear
And send along another tin?
Please send at once—you'll find us in,
We'll sit and wait the livelong day
When Super-Kreem is on the way!

SEASIDE BUCKETS

filled with Sharp's Super-Kreem Toffee are now on sale at **1/-; 2/6** (containing 15 ozs.—the most popular size), also in 2lb., 4lb. and 10lb. buckets.

8d. per ¼lb.

*Sold loose by weight or in 4lb. decorated tins—also sold in **1/-, 1/6,** and **2/9** tins. If unobtainable in your district, kindly send postcard giving name of your confectioner.*

E. SHARP & SONS, LIMITED, MAIDSTONE.

SHARP'S SUPER-KREEM TOFFEE

Holidays!

Going away?

Splendid! It will do you all the good in the world—if you know how to make the most of it.

New air, new scenes, new exercise, new food—you'll enjoy all these as a matter of course. But you'll enjoy them far better if your body is attuned to the change.

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You know how it is after about ten days—the different climate and liberal food get your system a bit clogged up, so to enjoy the last week as well as the first, you really need something to put you right.

That is why you need Kruschen Salts.

Kruschen Salts invigorate the internal mechanism of the body; they restore sluggish liver and kidneys to full activity so that every impurity is cleansed from the body, every ounce of good is derived from your food. New, clear blood tingles all over your body to refresh every fibre of the system.

Kruschen Salts

Good Health for a farthing a day

Tasteless in Tea

Put some Kruschen crystals every morning in your breakfast cup of tea—just a pinch—as much as will lie on a sixpence. They are tasteless. Taken this way there are 96 doses in a 1s. 9d. bottle of Kruschen Salts, enough to last over three months—the cost is less than one farthing a day. Every chemist sells Kruschen Salts. Get a bottle and pack it in your bag when you go away. Get it to-day, while you remember.

Save your happy memories with a Kodak

What pictures for your Kodak! Flowers, foliage and good brown earth; winding lanes and stretches of rolling grassland; jolly boisterous youngsters at their games—your own children laughing and shouting on the swing you have just fixed up for them — there are pictures everywhere! Now is the time to get your Kodak. Remember you can learn to use a Kodak in half-an-hour.

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Obtainable Everywhere throughout the World.

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VIRGINIA (1919 CROP) CIGARETTES

BIG SIZE: 20 FOR 1/5

JUBILEE SIZE: 20 FOR 1/-

Look for the winged horse on every packet.

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(The Safe Brand of Aspirin)

We recently announced the winning of the Milan Grand Prix and Gold Medal by Genasprin. Now it has won the great triple-award of the International Hygiene Exhibition, Paris—namely, the Grand Prix, Gold Medal, and Cup of Honour!

Like their British and Italian colleagues, the French doctors have found Genasprin to be the only aspirin tablet that is absolutely pure and safe. Yet it does everything that ordinary aspirin can do—stops Nervous and Rheumatic Pains—averts Colds and Influenza—promotes healthy sleep—and acts as a harmless soother after fatigue and excitement. (Dose: 2 tablets, disintegrated in water, after meals.)

Get a Free Sample to-day

Simply send us a twopenny stamp—to cover cost of postage—and we will forward you a Testing Sample of Genasprin together with an Explanatory Booklet. Please mention this magazine when writing.

All chemists stock Genasprin, in bottles of **35** tablets, price 2/-. But don't confuse it with ordinary brands of aspirin which depress the heart and upset the digestion. Ask for the Genasprin brand—and firmly insist on having it.

GENASPRIN

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Makers of
SANATOGEN, FORMAMINT, etc.
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3-Piece "PEMBROKE" Solid Oak Bedroom Suite.

Comprising WARDROBE, DRESSING CHEST and WASHSTAND.
WARDROBE 4 ft. 6 ins. extreme width, 4 ft. on Carcass, height 6 ft. 10 ins. Mirror of Bevelled and Silvered Plate Glass, 50 ins. by 15 ins. Made in three parts, full width drawer, ample hanging accommodation, with brass revolving and side hooks. DRESSING CHEST 3 ft. wide, full width deep drawers, Jewel Drawer, Swing Mirror of Bevelled and Silvered Plate Glass, 28 ins. by 18 ins., mounted on Castors. WASHSTAND 3 ft. wide, Figured Marble Slab and Back, convenient cupboard, 2 Towel Rails affixed, mounted on Castors. The whole of the pieces are of SOLID OAK and will stand a LIFE TIME'S WEAR. Copper or Brass Handles of Antique finish. Mirrors are Bevelled and Silvered British Plate Glass. If Washstand not required deduct £5 5s. Oak Cane Chairs to match, **12s. 6d.** each.

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Patterns to customers' own selection.

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—is beautiful BIRD'S Blanc-Mange.

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Season's New prices: 1½d. pkts.; Silver Boxes 7d. and 1/2

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Herrings in Tomato Sauce

FOR picnics, for afternoon tea, or as a seasonable lunch, you could not wish for a daintier dish than these superb *All-British* Fish—whether eaten just as they come straight-from-the-tin or made into satisfying sandwiches or a delicious salad.

Oval Tins: 1-lb. net, 1/1; ½-lb. net, 9d. Grocers everywhere.

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Proprietors: Shields Ice and Cold Storage Co., Ltd., North Shields. *Export Sales Office: 98, Gt. Tower Street, London, E.C.3.*

"They are exactly like my real string and could not possibly be told from Real."

A lady who had a "dreadful accident" with her real pearl necklet, replaced it with

Ciro Pearls

and she thus describes the success she obtained with same.

"I received the pearls this morning, and am delighted with them. They are exactly like my real string were and could not possibly be told from real. The following remark from my husband, who is supposed to be a judge of pearls, will tell you that they are satisfactory. I put your pearls on this morning as soon as I received them, and my husband, who does not know of the dreadful accident I had with my real string, said: 'I wondered when you were going to wear them again'—meaning my real pearls. Then he took a close look, and said: 'I am jolly proud of that transaction.' He got my pearls through a business deal, and you may know from these remarks how satisfied I am."

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Our Showrooms are on the First Floor—over Lloyds Bank.

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Golden Pippin
CIDER-DE-LUXE

has a character, flavour and bouquet quite its own because being cleanly and scientifically made from the pure undiluted juice of the finest West of England vintage apples it is remarkably free from acetic acid.

Obtainable from your Wine Merchant or Grocer, or the makers will send one doz. reputed quarts and two doz. reputed pints, duty free and carriage paid in England and Wales for 42/- including bottles and case, or a nine-gallon cask for 40/6. Off the latter price 15/- is allowed for empty cask when returned.

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POST FREE.

The name "Golden Pippin" protects the consumer and is a guarantee of purity and high quality.

HONEST ENGLISH CIDER
—The Best of all Beverages.

Famous Pipes by Orlik

ORLIK
Bruyère Antique

appeals to discerning judges of what pipe-perfection really means.

The beautifully grained Briar Root is specially selected for its compactness, and is subjected to an exclusive heating and drying process which drives out all moisture from the bowl.

No need for "breaking-in"—right from the first pipeful you'll find it smoke perfectly.

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Every genuine pipe branded **"ORLIK."**

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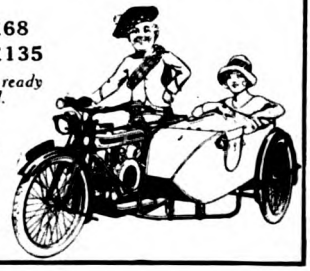
1d. a mile for two on the **Douglas**

The joy of the open road for a penny a mile for two, with unlimited right to break your journey, but never an involuntary stop, is provided by the Douglas 4 h.p. Combination—the most economical Sidecar Outfit, that combines the reliability of a Pullman with the convenience of running to your own time-table, at a much cheaper rate.

Solos from £68
Sidecars from £135
Fully equipped, ready for the road.



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Head Offices :
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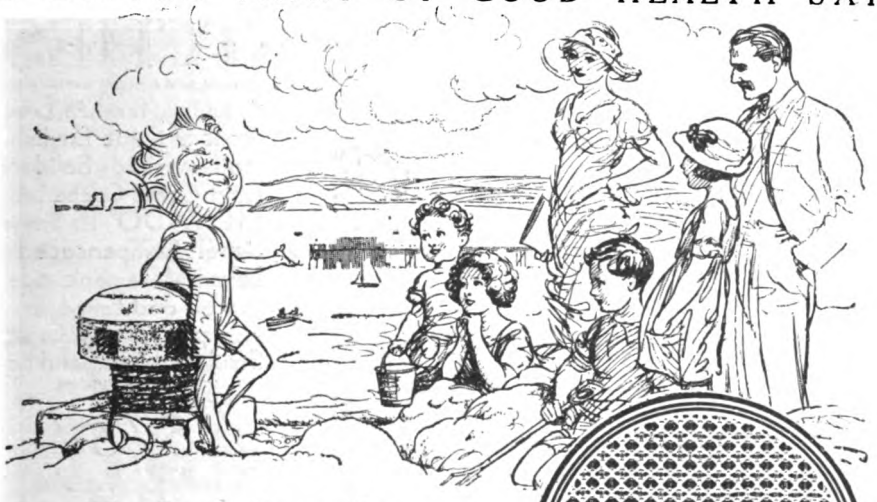
THE LITTLE FAIRY OF GOOD HEALTH SAYS:—



Get all the fresh air you can——

—not only at the seaside but at home; breathe deeply—air is life—and let your *pores* breathe.

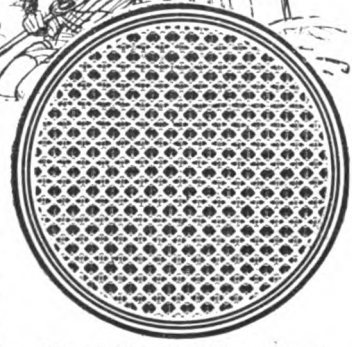
Let your *pores* breathe—that sounds funny? This is what I mean—wear clothing that keeps your pores unclogged in hot and clammy weather so that they are not hampered in their work of cleansing and vitalising the tissues.

Air will do this, keep you cool, and keep you free from colds and chills—*if you allow the air to circulate.*

Now Aertex Cellular Underwear and Shirts are made of a fabric containing hundreds of tiny cells—air cushions—you can see them in the photograph.

They permit the air to perform its natural work, equalising the temperature of the body, preventing colds and chills—keeping you cool, fresh, full of the joy of life, even on the hottest days.

Wear Aertex throughout this summer and you'll know what true warm weather comfort means.



The AERTEX Cellular principle of fabric construction allows for the free circulation of even-temperature air next to the skin, stimulating and refreshing the tissues with fresh supplies of health-giving oxygen, preventing chills.

AERTEX is the ideal wear for summer days. Prove its value to-day.

Wear **AERTEX**

cellular

UNDERWEAR FOR MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN, SHIRTS, SHEETS, ETC.

Look for the Aertex label on all genuine Aertex goods——refuse imitations.

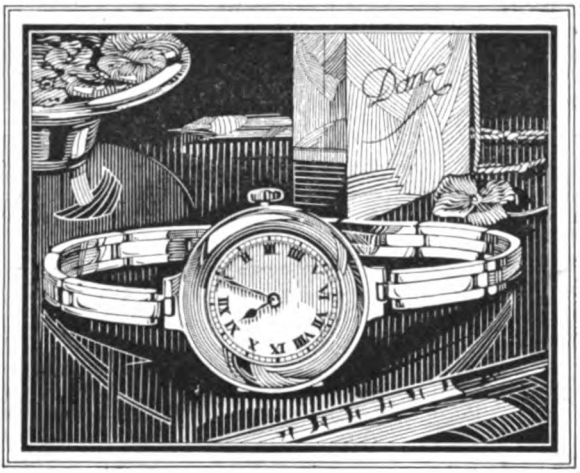
Reduced Prices

A Selection from List of Depots where AERTEX Cellular Goods may be obtained:

LONDON—ROBT. SCOTT, LTD., 8, Poultry, Cheapside, E.C.
OLIVER BROS., LTD., 417, Oxford St., W.
BOLTONS, LTD., 177, Piccadilly, W.
BIRMINGHAM—HYAM & CO., LTD., New St.
BRADFORD—HEY & CO., Hey's Corner.
BRIGHTON—G. OSBORNE & CO., East St.
BURTON-ON-TRENT—ELLIS & SON, High St.
DERBY—W. N. FLINT, 14 6, James St.
DUNDEE—A. CAIRD & SONS, LTD., 17, Reform St.
GLASGOW—PETTIGREW & STEPHENS, LTD.
HANLEY—J. E. CARHART Piccadilly.
LEEDS—MARSHALLS, LTD., Bond St.
LIVERPOOL—WILKINSON BROS., South Rd., W'loo.

Write for 1922 Catalogue, giving full range and prices of garments, etc., together with name of nearest retail depot, to
THE CELLULAR CLOTHING CO., LTD., FORE STREET, LONDON, E.C.2

HIGH GRADE WATCHES



(DISPOSAL OF A MANUFACTURERS STOCK)

Beautifully finished, Extra Stout 9 Carat English Hall-marked Solid Gold Cases Celebrated "MOVADO" 15 Screw Jewel Compensated Lever Movement adjusted and timed in four positions 9 Carat Solid Gold Expanding Bracelet.

£5/5/-

These Watch Bracelets are equal to others sold at £15/15/- Sent on approval. Cash refunded if you are not completely satisfied.

10 YEARS WRITTEN GUARANTEE GIVEN

Trade Inquiries Invited

Bravingtons
296-298 PENTONVILLE ROAD, KINGS CROSS N1 & 71 LUDGATE HILL E.C.4

SIMILAR MOVEMENT IN 18 CARAT GOLD £7/15/-

THE EDISON BELL (All British)

"HANDEPHON"

Britain's Best Portable Gramophone.

PLAYS ANY KIND OF RECORD.

Reduced Price £4-10s.

Weight 12½lbs.

Tone-arm automatically lowers into Cabinet as the lid is closed. NO LOOSE PARTS TO RATTLE.

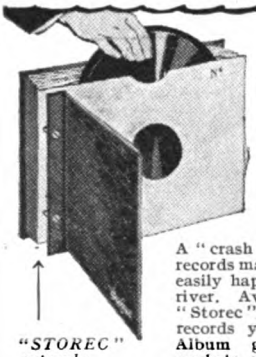
The "HANDEPHON" is entirely British made—motor, tone-arm, sound-box, cabinet, and every other part. Thus satisfaction is absolutely guaranteed. The model is the acme of portability and compactness. When closed, looks no bigger than an attaché case.

Use "Chromic" Needles on all your Records, 1/3 per 100. Each Point Plays TEN Records.

Ask your Dealer for Descriptive Pamphlet. Also for Catalogues of Edison Bell "Velvet Face" and "Winner" Records. Or write direct to Sole Manufacturers and Patentees—

J. E. HOUGH, Ltd., Edison Bell Works, London, S.E.15

There is Thirty Years' Reputation Behind the Name of EDISON BELL. All British, You Know.



"STOREC" expands

Keep your RECORDS SAFE on the RIVER

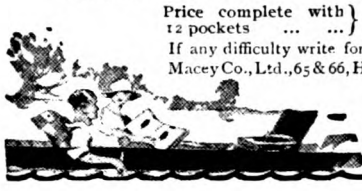
A "crash" with a pile of gramophone records may cost you pounds and it can easily happen at a picnic or on the river. Avoid this risk by getting a "Storec" Expanding Album for the records you carry about. "Storec" Album gives complete protection pockets movable and renewable—you can take just the number of records you require. Buy one now—ready for summer outings.

STOREC
EXPANDING ALBUM

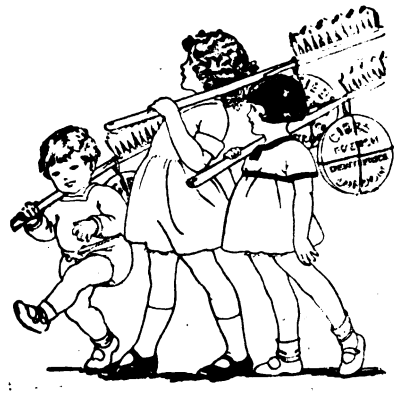
Obtainable from Music and Gramophone Dealers.

Price complete with 10 pockets 6/6
Price complete with 12 pockets 7/6

If any difficulty write for dealer's name
Macey Co., Ltd., 65 & 66, Houndsditch, E.1



Makers of "Zip" and Macey Music Binders.



Save Teeth—in Nature's Way

TEETH start to decay when attacked by the acids due to fermenting food. Nature tries to neutralise these acids with the saliva of the mouth, which is alkaline.

But the saliva alone is not enough to counteract the acid-forming powers of modern diet.

It needs assistance.

That is just what Gibbs Dentifrice gives.

The simple act of applying a wet brush to the fragrant pink cake liberates a neutralising force. Then brushing the teeth distributes it over the tooth surfaces, into every tiny crevice of the teeth and mouth.

Thus the polishing agent of Gibbs Dentifrice does its work thoroughly and harmlessly; the saponaceous base removes the greasy deposit from the teeth; essential oils refresh and purify the mouth, which is brought again to its natural alkaline condition. So Gibbs Dentifrice saves teeth in Nature's way—the safe and sure way.

Your teeth are Ivory Castles — Defend them with

Gibbs Dentifrice

Large size, 1/-. *De Luxe*, 1/6. *Refills for above*, 1½d.
Popular size, 7½d. *Tubes*, 7½d. & 1/-.

FROM YOUR CHEMIST.

Snip off Coupon NOW!

free!

Generous sample of Gibbs Dentifrice and the fascinating Ivory Castle Fairy Book. Send 2d. stamp for postage with coupon attached.

Name .....

Address .....

D. & W. GIBBS, Ltd. (Dept. 2305), Cold Cream Soap Works, London, E.1

She Defies the Sunshine by using TWO Creams

To prevent sunburn, freckles, roughness and redness of the skin — USE TWO CREAMS, POND'S VANISHING CREAM during the day, POND'S COLD CREAM before retiring to rest at night. This is the only sure way to protect your skin from the dangers of out-door exposure and ill effects of sea bathing.

Pond's Vanishing Cream disappears into the pores, instantly and entirely—an invisible protector which keeps your skin soft, smooth and fresh-looking. Use it at every opportunity during the day.

Pond's Cold Cream contains just the amount of natural oil your skin needs, and *must* have, to keep it young, retain its clearness, and prevent the formation of lines and wrinkles.

CAUTION. Some face creams encourage the growth of hair. You are safe with Pond's Creams, which never promote the growth of hair.

"TO SOOTHE AND SMOOTH YOUR SKIN."

Both Creams of all Chemists and Stores in handsome Opal Jars, 1/3 and 2/6, also Collapsible Tubes, 7½d. (handbag size) and 1/-.

Pond's Cold Cream and Vanishing Cream

POND'S EXTRACT CO. (Dept. 30), 71, Southampton Row, London, W.C.1.

At the Seaside

HOW the kiddies love to play at making Sand Castles with **Murray's Toffiekreem Pails.** Buy them one and see the delight on their little faces.

MURRAY'S TOFFIEKREEM

is the healthiest of sweetmeats. Made from pure butter and lots of cream and sugar.

Sold loose, **7d.** per ½-lb. In 2-lb. Seaside Pails, or packed in ¼-lb. and ½-lb. oval decorated tins.

Murray's

TOFFIEKREEM

THE PERFECT TOFFEE

T.21 Of all Confectioners.

FREE

BIG CATALOGUE OF MONEY SAVING CHINA BARGAINS

FREE GIFTS HUNDREDS OF DESIGNS IN ACTUAL COLORS FOR ALL BUYERS

HOUSEHOLD and Private Orders our **SPECIALITY.** Splendid Bargains in China, Pottery, and Glass. Tea, Dinner, and Toilet Sets from **12/9.** Complete Home Outfits from **57/6.** CATERING CROCKERY Outfits from **75/-.**

SPECIAL UNBREAKABLE QUALITY CHINA for Kitchen, Camp, Barrack, Hospital Use.

ONLY 28/9 **PACKED FREE**

This beautiful Tea Service. Splendid Quality. Tea Service, 6 persons, **18/3.** Dinner Service, **39/3.**

PATENT NON-DRIP TEAPOTS. The pot that saves the Cloth. Our own invention and manufacture. Guaranteed Perfect, Successful, Economical.

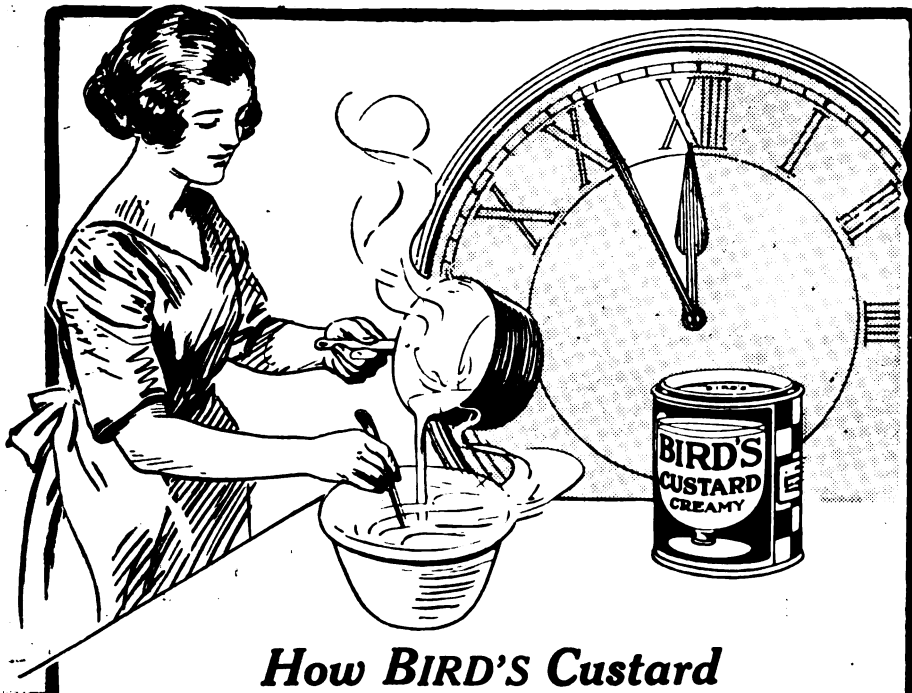
Satisfaction Guaranteed. All Prices Reduced.

Send Postcard To-day for Complete ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE FREE

CENTURY POTTERY Co.,

Manufacturers,

DEPT. S.M.7, BURSLEM, STAFFS.



How BIRD'S Custard saves time.

In the busy households of to-day, Bird's Custard has a supreme advantage,—*it is so quick and so easy to make.*

The few moments needed to make Bird's Custard can be slipped in with other work, yet although so quickly made, there is nothing hurried or "scrappy" about a dish of Bird's Custard.

Bird's is always a complete sweet course, whether eaten alone or served with stewed or tinned fruit.

BIRD'S CUSTARD,

with stewed or tinned fruit is a dish that every man revels in, while tiny tots and growing boys and girls simply love it. And they all thrive upon Bird's.

1½d. pkts.; 7d. & 1/2 Silvered Boxes; 1/7½ Large Tins.

THE LATEST THING IN "BLAZERS"

THE

"WESTO" BLAZER

In "NIGGER" BROWN, the King's Colour, or 'VARSITY BLUE.

THE "WESTO" is identical in appearance with the highest-priced blazer obtainable, while costing only 19/6. It is thoroughly well-tailored, inside and out, to fasten with three gilt buttons, having breast and two side patch pockets and lined sleeves. Worn with White or Grey Flannel Trousers, it is absolutely "IT." It is being sold in the most exclusive tailoring circles at 3 and 4 guineas.

OUR PRICE IS ONLY . . 19/6 (s. d.)

Its smart appearance and utility make it a necessity to the outdoor man, and our confidence in the excellence of the "WESTO" is such that we offer to send your money back if it does not give complete satisfaction.

Art Catalogue illustrating this and other Bargains in wearing apparel FREE ON REQUEST.

19/6 EACH

GEORGE WESTON & CO.

(Dept. S.T.),

Clothing Contractors—"Moneyback" Merchants.

Offices : 1, Bath Road - - - - } HOUNSLOW,
Warehouse and Store : Inverness Road } MIDDLESEX.

GENUINE **DOLLOND**

"WHITE STAR"

in leather sling case

AS SUPPLIED TO

leading Steamship Companies. The ideal glass for the seaside. *7 days' approval.* **63/-** net cash *post free* or

11/- deposit and 8 instalments of **7/-** each.

The MOST COMPACT Portable GRAMOPHONE

for Camp, Picnic, or Home use. Garrard Motor, solid Walnut case 14 x 11 x 6ins.

With seven double records.

21/- deposit and 8 monthly payments of **12/6** each.

LUDGATE RECORDS

10in. double-sided.

2/6 each.

If your local Music Dealer *refuses* to supply Ludgate Records we will pay postage on orders for not less than six.

List free.

Vest Pocket Kodak with Daylight Developing Tank and all requisites to make finished photographs. Full instructions. No Dark Room and no Lessons required.

14/- Cash with order and 8 monthly payments of **7/-** each.

DOLLOND & CO., LTD., Est. 1750.
44, Kirby St., London, E.C.1

On Holidays a heavy Trouser Press is useless

That is why thousands use the "Alpha." It **weighs 20 ozs., packs into 3½ x 2½ x 2½**, creases and stretches trousers perfectly, and makes the whole suit wrinkle-free. You will always use the Alpha"—**it lasts practically a lifetime.**

Your friends use it. **Post Free 8/6** in U.K.

"ALPHA" No. 2 DE LUXE. Polished Walnut Slats. Extra-power Nickelled Springs and Fittings. Hangs on bar or hook. **15/6** Post Free.

Cross Cheque or P.O. "London Joint City & Midland Bank, Ltd."

MAY & CO. (Dept. 11), **3, TUDOR STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.**

BEDFORD RIDING BREECHES CO.

THE LARGEST MAIL ORDER SPORTS TAILORS

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED OR CASH REFUNDED IN FULL.

GUINEA RIDING BREECHES

To measure.

Cut, style, fit and finish perfect. Superior qualities **25/-** to **80/-**.

ALL-WOOL HAND-WOVEN KERRY HOMESPUN

SPORTS JACKET & KNICKERS, £5-5-0

Made to Measure.

Sold by many at Seven Guineas.

Send for Patterns & Self-Measure Form

State requirements and quote "Dept. M.S."

29, CT. TITCHFIELD ST., OXFORD ST., LONDON, W.1.

Some of the uses of the Otterburn Baby-Rug.

As a Nursing Wrap.

As a Cot Coverlet.

As a Cradle Coverlet.

As a Cosy Rug for the Pram.

Otterburn Baby-Rugs are such a wonderful comfort to Baby that Mothers almost invariably order a *second* Rug after a few days' use.

Thoughtful Mothers have bought 25,000 Otterburn Baby-Rugs during the last 10 years solely from hearing neighbours speak well of them. Now, with the resources of two Power Mills, near Carlisle, to aid the output of the little Century-old Hand-Loom Mill up near the Border, Waddells of Otterburn are able to sell their Baby-Rugs to a wider field, through Drapers, Pram Sellers, Baby-wear Outfitters, and, *in case of supply-difficulty only*, direct by post.

In seven self-colours **15/6** Size 30in. x 36in.

Otterburn Rug

Made from Neck-and-Shoulder New Cheviot Wool.

Of Drapers & Pram Sellers **15/6** or post free.

Extracts from Buyers' recent letters:—

From Essex.
"*I was so pleased with your Baby-Rug (Biscuit) received last week, that I am writing back to* **send one along** *to my brother's address.*"

From Cardiff.
"*Was extremely pleased with the Otterburn Rug received a few days ago, and will be pleased if you will* **forward one to** —— *as soon as possible.*"

From Liverpool.
"*Kindly send a Baby-Rug (White) by return . . . was very pleased with* **the other Rug** *that you sent.*"

From Bexhill.
"*Delighted with Otterburn Baby-Rug.*"

From Chelmsford.
"*The Rug has given every satisfaction.*"

From Fife.
"*I duly received Cream Baby-Rug, with which I was very pleased.*"

Since 1821, Waddells of Otterburn have been famed for the honesty and character of everything they make. Otterburn Baby-Rugs, made by Waddells of the third and fourth generations, express Otterburn ideals in the fullest degree. . . . You cannot get wrong if the Rug you buy for your Baby bears the Otterburn silk-woven Label, but you may regret it if you buy an imitation.

Ask to see Otterburn Baby-Rugs (in Cream, Grey, Sky, Saxe, Rose, Navy or Biscuit). Stocked by Drapers, Pram Sellers and Baby-wear Outfitters. Rather than take an unworthy imitation, send your **15/6** to the Makers, mentioning your usual Draper's name and address and the colour of the Rug needed.

Write distinctly, please.

OTTERBURN MILL, LTD.,
Otterburn, Northumberland. *(Estab. 1821.)*

Actual photograph of the Otterburn Baby-Rug; suitable for Pram, Cot, Cradle, or as a Nursing Wrap. Size 30 in. by 36 in., fringed at ends. Colours: Cream, Grey, Sky, Saxe, Rose, Navy and Biscuit.

This silk-woven label is stitched to every genuine Otterburn Baby-Rug.

The Otterburn "Tab" should be particularly sought when you buy a Baby-Rug. It is there to protect you from dishonest and untrustworthy imitations.

9

The Ideal Summer Toilet Cream

Get as much pleasure out of the open air as you can—get a tanned skin if it suits you—but use Icilma Cream FREELY day by day. It is the one cream your skin needs.

Not only does Icilma Cream prevent the discomforts caused by sun, wind or dust, but it *cools and refreshes* the skin, keeping it always soft and clear. Useful for insect bites.

Icilma Cream is non-greasy—alone contains the cooling, natural water from the Icilma Spring and *vanishes better* than vanishing cream.

Icilma Face Powder

Icilma Bouquet Face Powder, the fascinating silk-sifted face powder—supreme for every purpose for which toilet powder is used—is now sold in a popular size at 1/3 per box.

New popular size, 1/3

Icilma Cream

Price 1/3 per pot; large pot, 2/-. Flesh-tinted Cream 1/9 per pot. Icilma Bouquet Face Powder (two tints—Naturelle and Creme), new popular size, 1/3; large size, 2/6 per box.

Use it daily and look your best

The "Grey Hair" Problem

Solved by a New Discovery

"Nuctone" is an entirely new discovery, which gradually restores the colour to the Hair, without Dyeing.

Colour Restored Gradually, Permanently, Safely

There is no sudden change from greyness to the natural colour of the Hair, as with Dyeing. The colour comes gradually, but permanently and safely.

Guaranteed not to contain Sulphur, Lead, or any other injurious ingredients. Everyone who has tried "Nuctone" is delighted with the results. If your Hair is going grey, send for a bottle of "Nuctone" to-day; **6/6** post free. "Nuctone" for Dark Hair. "Nuctone" Eclaire for Fair Hair.

Obtainable from all leading Chemists, Hairdressers & Stores, or by post (in land 6d. extra) from

J. STEWART, LTD., 80, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1.

For CHILDREN'S SKIN DISORDERS

and minor hurts. The majority of the inevitable illnesses of children, chicken pox, etc., etc., are accompanied by some abnormal condition of the skin. To allay the irritation that is usually present

WRIGHT'S COAL TAR OINTMENT

is absolutely the pre-eminent remedy.

By reason of its antiseptic properties it is an ideal dressing for the little ones' minor injuries—knocks, cuts, scratches, &c. Neglect is often dangerous.

As safe & dependable as the famous Wright's Coal Tar Soap.

Of all Chemists and Stores. In tins 1/3, in jars (triple size) 2/9. If any difficulty in obtaining write to Wright, Layman and Umney, Ltd., Southwark, S.E.1.

If your palate could analyse

the luscious flavour of 'O.K.' Sauce it would detect the sun-ripened tomatoes, Seville oranges, Valencia raisins, Messina lemons, Indian mangoes, and the fragrant spices of the East. No other Sauce contains such an exquisite blending of good things

'O.K.'

A Rich Thick

SAUCE

The Favourite Sweet at all Seasons.

GREEN'S CHOCOLATE MOULD

(CHOCOLATE BLANC-MANGE)

POST CARD
H. Samuel
31 Market St.
Manchester

SEND A POSTCARD TO THE FACTORY

SEND A POSTCARD NOW TO H. SAMUEL'S HUGE FACTORY!

It brings you by return a wonderful money-saving

FREE BOOK

of 3,000 Bargains

—splendid Watches and beautiful Jewellery at Factory Prices! Write now! See the lists of

FREE PRIZES

for all Buyers.

Write Now!

63/-

52/6

72/-

8/10/-

A FULL MONTH'S TRIAL

35/-

GOLD NECKLET AND PENDANT

Set with lustrous Opals.

OVER 500 DIAMOND & GEM-SET RINGS.

Fine selected Stones in latest settings. From **42/-**

35/-

57/6

WRITE NOW!

OVERSEAS ORDERS

receive the prompt attention of a special manager. Catalogue mailed free.

67/6

ROLLED GOLD KEYLESS LEVER.

Perfect time-keeper, fully jewelled lever movement, handsome case. Warranted for 10 years. **57/6**

SOLID GOLD WATCH BRACELET.

High-grade jewelled movement. 10 years' warranty. Extra heavy case .. **67/6**

H. SAMUEL

31, MARKET ST., MANCHESTER.

Over 85 Branches, including:

WOOLWICH: 40 and 42, Powis Street.
CROYDON: 16, North End.
NEWCASTLE: 2, Grainger Street, W.
PORTSMOUTH: 141, Commercial Road.
GLASGOW: 134-136, Argyle Street.

Full List in the Big Free Book

H. SAMUEL, LTD.

The Man Who Wants Quality

Need Pay Only Barratt's Factory Price-By-Post For the Finest Footwear Northampton Produces

Don't be tied up to the old system which fills the retailer's till without giving you any advantages. Why argue about it—when you can test our proposition without risking anything but the trouble of writing. Barratt's are quite willing to leave the matter to your judgment. If you don't find these shoes at least one-third lower in price than you have paid the retailer and even better in quality than he supplies send the shoes back. Barratt's will refund your cash and any postal expenses you have incurred.

Direct-by-Post

25/-

Post Free.

Postage Overseas Extra.

Style 1682

Same Shoe in Best Brown Willow Calf, Rich Tone, Style 1482, 30/-

Look for these Qualities in this Fine Brogue Shoe

Get the Box Calf uppers in your hand and note the substance and the "kindly," supple feel of the leather. See how even and perfect the surface is. Only the best selected skins give you that. Put them on and you'll admire the smart Brogue ornament, and you'll find the fit snug, lying close to the foot at sides and gripping the heel snugly. Note the smooth solid leather insole and linings, the flexibility of the solid English leather sole stitched on hand-sewn principle. Ideal for Golf and Sports wear; smart for holiday and dress wear. You'll wonder how Barratt's can do it at the price.

HOW TO ORDER—DIRECT BY POST

HOME: Simply mention Style 1682, enclose Treasury Notes (registered), cheque or money order for 25/- (size 12 1/- extra), and post to Barratt's. ***OVERSEAS:*** With Cash on Delivery orders, send 10/- deposit only. Pay when shoes arrive. Where C.O.D. is not in operation, enclose full amount and postage. Weight (packed) 4 lbs.

FOOTSHAPE FITTINGS.

When ordering state usual size worn or send "Footshape," got by outlining stockinged foot as it rests with normal pressure on paper. Hold pencil upright. Sizes: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 (size 12 1/- extra). Four widths: Narrow, Medium, Wide, Extra Wide. If not satisfactory, return shoes unsoiled. Money sent back immediately.

W. BARRATT & CO., LTD., 20, "Footshape," Northampton, England

Send 3d. postage for Barratt's 115-page Illustrated Catalogue.

They don't fray

before you may reasonably expect them to; and that means the minimum of inconvenience and expense to you.

There's the satisfaction, also, that your boots and shoes will always present a neat appearance if you insist upon being supplied with:

PATON'S BOOT & SHOE LACES

From Bootmakers, Repairers and Stores.——If any difficulty write to the Mills.

WM. PATON, LTD., Johnstone, Scotland.

P 10

Hetty King on Trousers

She Tells Men How to Banish Baggy Knees.

The World's Premier Male Impersonator writes:

"Every pair of trousers I wear is treated with 'Wray's Evercrease'—just once—that's all. Simple, satisfactory, and safe, and the trousers last longer and keep shape and smartness to the end of their service."

No Gum. No Rubber. Absolutely Waterproof.

"Wray's Evercrease" (light or dark according to colour of cloth), price 1/6 per tube, can be obtained from all leading stores, or 1/8 post free from

E. S. WRAY & SON, 15, New Street, Covent Garden, LONDON, W.C.2.

WRAY'S EVERCREASE

7 YEARS' WEAR!

Jute Soles last much longer than any others. Suit equally House, all Sports, Holidays. Mr. Blackshaw, Tynygongl, says:

"Last pair 7 years in use and still good."

Mrs. C——, 7, Hackney Rd., Maidstone, says:

"So comfortable for standing long hours. Cannot do without them."

Say size and Colour.	Prices (post free), U.K.		
Colour—Brown, Black, or White.	Children's.	Ladies'.	Gents'.
A. Plain Shoes (without Strapping) ..	3/11	4/2	4/4
D. Leather Fittings (as per illustration) ..	—	5/6	5/9
Superior Blocked, no strapping (Boots 1s. Extra)		6/6	7/-
Leather Soled Shoes, superior (Strapped) ..	7/6	7/6	9/6

"Ideal" for Shipboard in any capacity.

Jute Shoes cheapest while leather so dear. Easier to feet.

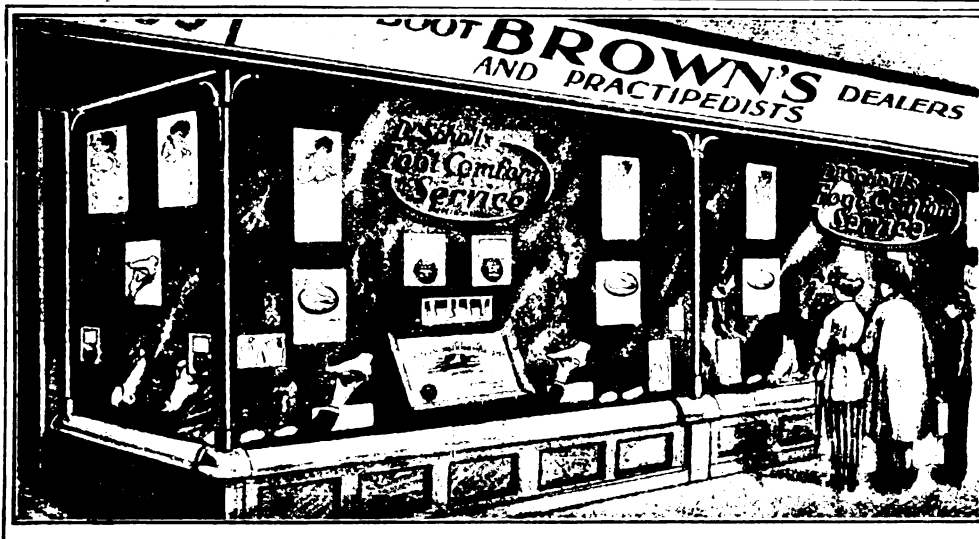
Coolest for Holidays and Sea Shore. **NO NAILS.**

Three pairs at one time, 2d. per pair off; six pairs, 3d. Full list, 2d.

PATENT CANVAS SHOE CO., 1, STEPS ROAD, near GLASGOW.

40 years' Advertisers. Coolest for Hot Climates.

Sent abroad on receipt of M.O. and Parcel Postage.

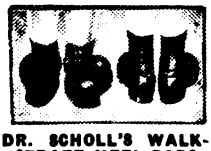


Foot Comfort Extended to Everyone

In all cases of foot trouble such as tired, aching, weak or flat foot, bunions, corns, callouses, hammer-toes, run-over heels, etc.

DR. SCHOLL'S ANTERIOR METATARSAL ARCH SUPPORT
restores the arch across ball of the foot. Relieves and corrects pressure and pain at the sole, bunions, callouses, etc.
Price per pair, 12/6

DR. SCHOLL'S FIXO CORN PLASTERS
instantly relieve pain, absolutely remove corns in 48 hours. Per packet, 9d. & 1/3



DR. SCHOLL'S WALK-STRATE HEEL PADS
for run-over heels. Preserve shape of shoes and ensure them wearing down evenly.
Per pair, 1/6

Dr Scholl's
Foot Comfort Appliances

and Specialities afford instant relief and permanent correction. In every locality there are Dealers whose staffs include "Scholl" trained Foot Experts (Practipedists) qualified to analyze all foot ailments.

Obtain free advice from the "Scholl" dealer nearest you. He will demonstrate the "Scholl" method, and correctly select, fit and adjust the "Scholl" Appliances that will give you perfect foot comfort.

Throughout the world the medical profession and millions of satisfied wearers testify to the efficacy of "Scholl" Appliances.

Name of nearest dealer and Booklet free.

THE SCHOLL MFG. CO., LTD.,
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Watch your Feet

DR. SCHOLL'S FOOT-EAZER
affords comfort and relief in a moment to tired, aching feet, weak arches, flat foot, etc. Worn comfortably in your ordinary shoes. Men's and Women's sizes. Price per pair, 10/6.

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Straightens crooked, distorted toes, and corrects bunions by mechanical action. Made of finest soft surgical rubber. Worn comfortably in your ordinary shoes. Men's and Women's sizes, each 2/-

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protects the inflamed area from pressure. Reduces the enlargement by absorption, and stops shoe bulging. Men's and Women's sizes, each 2/6

I CURE WEAK NERVES!

I cordially invite every reader of the STRAND MAGAZINE who suffers from nerve weakness or ill-health of any description to write at once for my FREE BOOK on nerve trouble.

I can positively cure sleeplessness, the worry habit, irritability, palpitation, sudden exhaustion, heaviness of limbs, or, in fact, any HEART, NERVE, or STOMACH TROUBLE.

If you are pessimistic, lacking in ambition, or without the energy to carry out your ambitions or perform your work satisfactorily, if everything seems a trial and a care instead of a joy and pleasure, it is a sure sign that you have become *neurasthenic*. In such case, you cannot possibly become the social or business success you were meant to be until you have regained health and fitness.

There is only one sure and certain method in the world to-day —THE INCH HOME TREATMENT. Pleasant and inexpensive, with results *PERMANENT*, it is worth its weight in Treasury notes to the nerve sufferer. If you have tried other methods without satisfaction, *don't hesitate*, write TO-DAY—that is the kind of case I like to get.

I hold thousands of testimonials from patients who could not last through an entertainment or stay in a crowd until they came to me. My treatment was put to a severe test during the war with numbers of shell-shock cases—the worst form of neurasthenia it is possible to have.

Remember, without treatment, nerve trouble usually ends in a nervous breakdown, after which a cure is more difficult to obtain.

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I hold extraordinary testimonials from pupils over the age of sixty as to the wonderful rejuvenating powers of my treatment. I can add years to the life of all middle-aged patients, and at the same time give them renewed vigour. All letters treated in strict confidence. No charge for diagnosis or opinion.

All interested in the foregoing are invited to send a 3d. stamp and ask for "NERVE BOOKLET."

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The above is the title of an illustrated booklet showing how health, strength, and development can be improved out of all knowledge. This particularly appeals to the sportsman, the golfer who would improve at his game, the tennis player, boxer, cyclist, or motorist. The "H. S. D." system guarantees improved development and perfect health, cures rounded shoulders, flat chest, spinal curvature, and increases the height.

Only One Booklet sent to each applicant.

Please make it perfectly clear which booklet is required. Write to-day—"Health is the first wealth."

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Brooks' Appliance is a new scientific discovery with automatic air cushions that draws the broken parts together, and binds them as you would a broken limb. It absolutely holds firmly and comfortably and never slips. Always light and cool, and conforms to every movement of the body without chafing or hurting. We make to your measure, and send it to you on a strict guarantee of satisfaction or money refunded, and we have put our price so low that anybody, rich or poor, can buy it. Remember, we make it to your order—send it to you—you wear it—and if it doesn't satisfy you, you send it back to us, and we will refund your money. That is the way we do business—always absolutely on the square—and we have sold to thousands of people this way for the past ten years. Remember, we use no salves, no harness, no lies, no fakes. We just give you a straight business deal at a reasonable price.

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Write at once for our Illustrated Booklet.

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MINERAL SPRING

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Cooling, Refreshing, Sparkling. Nice to take.
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A Delightful Test

To bring you prettier teeth

This offers you a ten-day test which will be a revelation to you. It will show you the way to whiter, cleaner, better teeth.

Millions of people of some forty races now employ this method. Leading dentists everywhere advise it. You should learn how much it means to you and yours.

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Your teeth are clouded more or less by film. The fresh film is viscous—you can feel it with your tongue. It clings to teeth, enters crevices and stays there.

Old methods of brushing leave much of that film intact. The film absorbs stains, so the teeth look discoloured. Film is the basis of tartar.

How it ruins teeth

That film holds food substance which ferments and forms acids. It holds the acids in contact with the teeth and the acids may cause decay.

Most tooth troubles have a potential origin in film, and they are almost universal.

Now we combat it

Dental science, after long research, has found two film combatants. Many careful tests have proved their efficiency. Leading dentists everywhere urge their daily use.

A new-day tooth paste has been created, called Pepsodent. It complies with modern requirements. And these two great film combatants are embodied in it.

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Pepsodent brings two other effects which authority now deems essential. It multiplies the starch digestant in the saliva.

It multiplies the alkalinity of the saliva. That is Nature's neutralizer for acids which may cause decay.

Send the coupon for a 10-Day Tube and watch these effects for a while. Note how clean the teeth feel after using. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as the film-coats disappear.

Then judge the benefits by what you see and feel. You will be amazed.

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The New-Day Dentifrice

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839

10-DAY TUBE FREE.

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Mail 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent to—

Name.....

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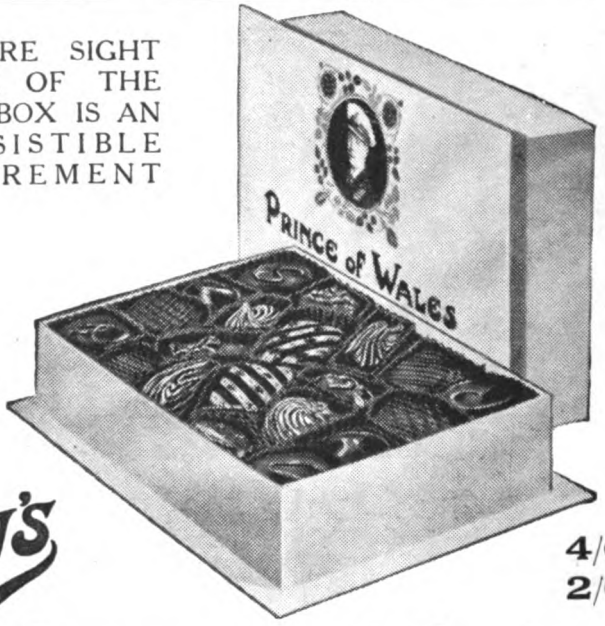
Give full address. Write plainly.
Only one tube to a family.

STRAND MAG./August.

THE MERE SIGHT ALONE OF THE OPEN BOX IS AN IRRESISTIBLE ALLUREMENT



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For all Homes

IDEAL summer surroundings with the ideal summer beverage occupying pride of place.

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From tin to tumbler
Freeman's Glass Lemon
POWDER
MADE IN DELECTALAND.

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They Seek and Find Renewed Health & Strength in Sanatogen

If you are wondering where to get fresh vigour for your overworked nerves, where to find a better appetite, better digestion, and consequent freedom from irritability, languor and the "blues," a countless multitude of grateful people have shown which road to follow.

These people, many of them famous as the leaders of thought and action, have written letters breathing gratitude and enthusiasm for what Sanatogen has done for them in re-invigorating and re-animating their tired minds and bodies. They tell, in convincing terms, of regained relish for food, regained strength and endurance of body and mind, of better digestion, better sleep, of a regained enjoyment of work and play, of life itself.

Mr. Eden Phillpotts, the well-known writer: "I can give Sanatogen high praise from personal experience."

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Sanatogen is a pure, healthful food and tonic, free from false stimulants, and has behind it a splendid record of achievement. At the International Congress of Medicine it was the only food-tonic exhibited which was awarded the Grand Prix, the highest award. Does not such a product deserve your fullest confidence? Is it not your duty to give it a trial?

SANATOGEN

(The True Tonic Food)

Get a supply of Sanatogen *to-day*. All Chemists sell it—prices from 2/3 to 10/9 per tin. Take two teaspoonsful of Sanatogen three times a day for a few weeks, and note the marked improvement in your health.

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Makers of FORMAMINT, GENASPRIN, etc.

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THE CAXTON SERVICES.
DIRECT FROM THE POTTERIES
1 CRATE Contents:
1 Dinner Set for 6 persons.
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1 Set of Jugs (3).
ALL TO MATCH as here shown, in lovely shade of Blue. Also 3 Pie Dishes and 3 Pudding Bowls (var's sizes) Plain White.
67/6 Packed free. Carriage Paid. 67/6
The Safe delivery The Crate. Guaranteed. Crate. Money returned if not satisfied.
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3 hours Cooking for 1 penny

Only an "ONWARD" Oven can make cooking as cheap as that, because the "ONWARD" is equipped with a special device to retain heat and economise in gas consumption. And it cooks to perfection in half the time. No spoiled dishes. Simply leave it to the "ONWARD" to make a positive success of every meal, and be finished with cooking drudgery.

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The PEARL differs from other HAND machines inasmuch as it combines remarkable efficiency with lightness (it weighs only 5lbs.), ease of working and extreme utility.
All the usual Vacuum Cleaner objections—"too heavy," "too complicated," "too laborious," etc.—are overcome in the PEARL. It not merely cleans the surface, but gliding gently and silently over the carpet extracts ALL the dirt, trapping it instantly in the dust-bag at the mouth of the oak dust-box.

PEARL
Vacuum Cleaner
Price 50/- Only.

"The 'Pearl' and the Girl."

The PEARL ensures a perpetually clean house. Not only is it ideal for Spring Cleaning, but its everyday use ensures constant cleanliness without removing carpets or turning out rooms. It is the lightest, easiest, and most efficient HAND Vacuum Cleaner extant.

INSIST on the PEARL. Obtainable of John Barker & Co., Ltd., Wm. Whiteley, Ltd., Waring & Gillow, Ltd., A. W. Gamage, Ltd., All Stores, Ironmongers and Furnishers—

Or direct, carriage paid, from
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Order AT ONCE for Quick Delivery.

How Different It Might Have Been!

How many widows struggling to bring up young children—how many reduced gentlewomen brought up in comparative luxury and now eking out existence on a miserable pittance, have raised this bitter cry!

How Different It *Would* Have Been Had a Fair Proportion of the Bread-winner's Income Been Devoted To
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The "ACME" Policy is recommended as being particularly suitable for Family Provision—its large range of benefits being guaranteed and inserted in the Policy.

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is to keep them in perfect condition. Doorways, passages and tracks should be polished frequently. This requires no great amount of time or effort if Johnson's Prepared Wax and Weighted Polishing Brush are used.

Johnson's Prepared Wax does not show scratches or heel-prints—and floors polished with it can easily be kept in perfect condition.

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FREE. *This Book on Home Beautifying*

In almost every home there is one or more pieces of furniture the worse for wear, and which is an eyesore. This book tells how old and worn furniture can be made to look as good as new. It explains just what materials to use, and how to apply them—tells how you can even make inexpensive soft-wood look as rich and beautiful as hard-wood. There is not a piece of furniture or woodwork in your home, whether Mahogany, Fumed Oak, Golden Oak, or any other wood, but what it can be wonderfully improved by following the simple instructions.

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This book is the work of experts—illustrated in colour. It gives covering capacities—includes Colour Card, etc. Every home-lover should have a copy. We will gladly send it free and post paid for the name of your best dealer. To those about to build, the book will be most interesting and valuable. If you will enclose 6d. in stamps, we will also send you a tin of JOHNSON'S PREPARED WAX—the dust-proof Polish for Floors, Woodwork, Furniture, and Linoleum. It gives a lasting, lustrous finish. It is used in the best homes the world over. Fill in the coupon and post it to-day.

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Please send me free and post paid your instruction book on Wood Finishing and Home Beautifying.
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A golden wisp of fine Virginia tobacco is rolled with care in its delicate sheath and becomes a fragrant Three Nuns Cigarette

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10's	20's	50's	100's
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Branch of The Imperial Tobacco Company (of Great Britain and Ireland), Limited,
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A Shooting Shoe

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Style 1502.

In Black and Brown Zebu Leather; full medium toe; strong double soles, ½-in. thick, in one piece through to heel; leather lined throughout; wide welts, extended heels, watertight tongue. Average pair weighs 3lbs. Send size or foot outline when ordering. Boot similar to above shoe, 48/-.

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DON'T BUY BLADES. You can keep your present Blades in constant use, keen and sharp for many months, if you use The

MONKEY STROP

the cheapest machine of its kind on the market—yet MOST efficient—putting the true keen "Barber's" edge to your Blades—**both sides at once**—in a few seconds by simply turning the handle. The "Monkey" Strop is the only Strop which readily takes Gillette and **any** other type of Blade. Scores of thousands are now giving satisfaction—saving their cost over and over again. You can bring even discarded blades into perfect condition by a few turns on the "Monkey" Strop—the wonderful little appliance which is indispensable to every Safety Razor user. You may pay more for a Strop, but you cannot get a more efficient device—the new "Monkey" Strop is **perfect.**

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Obtainable from Selfridge, London, and other Stores, or direct from Manufacturers—
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A PERFECT CURE FOR SHOES LOOSE IN THE HEEL

From all Bootmakers.

6d. per pair.

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The Family Doctor says :

Good toffee does good by stealth, and that's how all the best kind of good is done.

Good toffee pleases the palate and then satisfies by nourishing.

By all means let the youngsters "eat more good toffee," and if I may venture to suggest the very best, my preference is for

Mackintosh's Toffee de Luxe

Egg & Cream-de-Luxe Café-de-Luxe Almond Toffee-de-Luxe
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Plain Toffee-de-Luxe.

Sold loose by weight at 8d. per ¼-lb., and in Baby Oval Tins and Tall Tins at 1/3 each. Junior Oval Tins and Tall Tins at 2/6 each; and in 4-lb. Tins.

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EVERY PEN GUARANTEED

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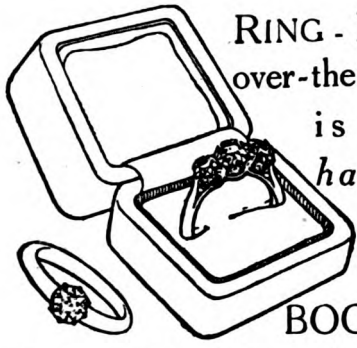

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"Of course I couldn't," you will reply; "such a thing is impossible."

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Based on an entirely new principle, the Pelman method is simplicity itself, and the very first lesson of the Course will amaze you. There is not a word of English in this lesson, yet you can read it with ease, and you could do so even if you didn't possess the slightest previous knowledge of the language in question. It sounds almost incredible, but it is perfectly true.

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Although designed to give an easy, comfortable fit to the wearer, the NORMAC is compact and can be folded and carried quite as easily as a newspaper.

Every NORMAC is GUARANTEED Rain and Wind Proof for two years. Made in the following colours — Light Fawn, Fawn, Mid-Fawn, and Slate Grey.

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The NORMAC Reg'd

The Mac with the guarantee

BLANCO

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"Keeps white shoes white"

—and does it well!—no mess, no trouble. Clean and handy. Economical too—apply thinly. Easy to use—applied in a few moments. Does not rub off.

"BLANCO" is the Registered Trade Mark of the original and only genuine article—look for the name "BLANCO" on each tin and cake—refuse substitutes.

In metal box with cake and sponge at **6d. & 9d.**—*cakes separately,* **2d.** *each.*

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This Prospectus describes both Courses fully. Send a copy of this Pupil's Sketch, or an Original Drawing (preferred), for my Free Criticism *and* Prospectus. A p.c. *alone* will bring you the Prospectus. Write to me personally—Percy V. Bradshaw, Principal,

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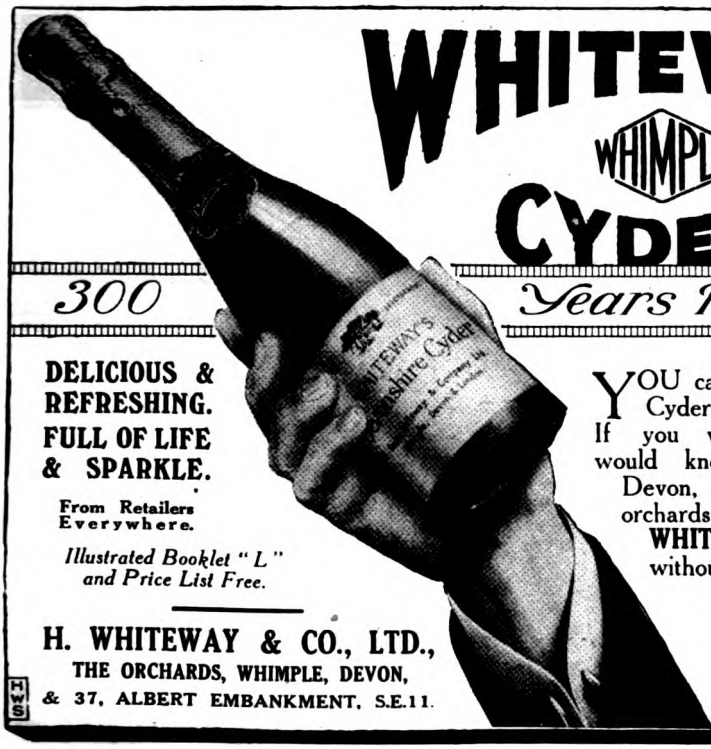

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From Retailers Everywhere.

Illustrated Booklet "L" and Price List Free.

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THE ORCHARDS, WHIMPLE, DEVON,
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HWS

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It is sold with each Aero-Special Bicycle, and remains with it *even if you sell it.* That is why

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For Over 50 Years
Britain's Best Bicycle

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ALL AERO-SPECIAL BICYCLES
Last year's price, £15 15s.
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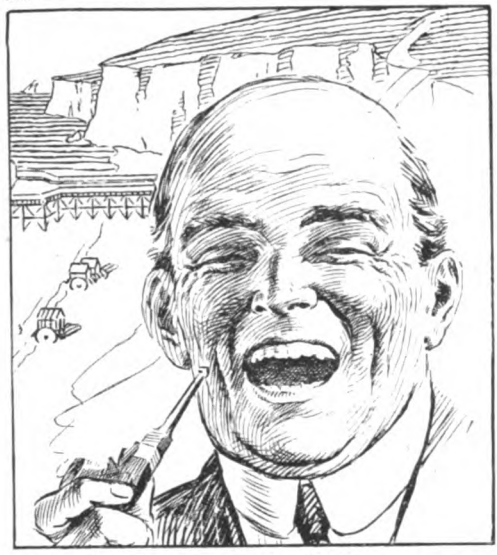
Get this little Rudge Book FREE and make your selection. Obtainable at The Bicycle Shop (Dept. 201), 230, Tottenham Court Road, W.1, or sent post free from Rudge-Whitworth, Ltd. (Dept. 201), Coventry.



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We call it the medium mixture with the generous flavour, and that just about describes it. For Cordangan's as pure and as natural as the heather, as expansive as the downs; and COOL——well, there isn't a tongue-bite in a month of it.

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(Accent "DAN")

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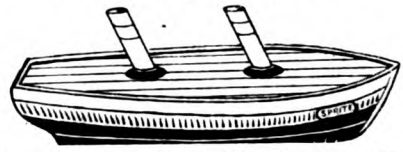
Seaside Joys FOR Girls and Boys ARE RUBBADUBDUB REGISTERED FLOATING TOYS

They will be delighted with this Rubbadubdub Boat, which cannot sink, and is just the thing for long voyages of imagination.



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5 more Beacon Oilskins as last.

". . . Cheque enclosed for 5 'Pioneer' Coats same as you supplied me with previously. It was a godsend to me in my work as a Transport Officer during the awful weather."

Any outdoor job is a dry job *always* inside a Beacon Oilskin.

The "Pioneer" is a smooth lightweight double Oilskin, with a blizzard-proof triple front. Made for Horsemen. It keeps all rain out—always, keeps the saddle dry, too, half covers the horse's back, and never goes sticky. Skirt 120 in. wide, 30 in. buttoned vent at back, inner extending saddle flap, knee straps, wind cuffs, and two roomy pockets. Made in a Bronze shade Oilskin, weight about 4 lbs., **55/-**. With Belt and Otterburn Wool Fleece detachable lining (for Sporting or Motoring Wear), **92/6**. Sou'-Wester to match, **6/-**. Post free United Kingdom; extra abroad.

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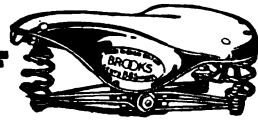

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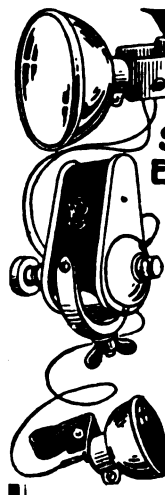

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All British Made.

Day by Day Year by Year

The "Voltalite" gives entire satisfaction.

AS USED BY H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY.

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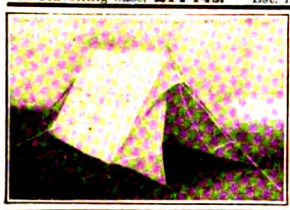

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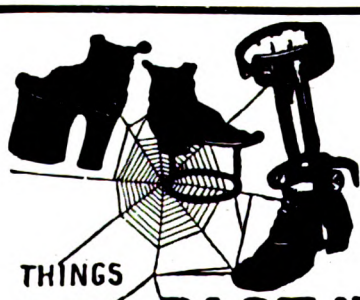

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Contents for August, 1922.

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THE
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August, 1922.

POSSIBLY IT WAS ACCIDENTAL, BUT THE PUPPY SHE HAD PICKED UP, AND WHICH WAS NOW MAKING FRANTIC ENDEAVOURS TO LICK HER FACE, WAS OUT AND AWAY THE BEST OF THE LITTER.

(*See page* 100.)

LADY CYNTHIA AND THE HERMIT

by

H. C. McNEILE ("SAPPER")

ILLUSTRATED BY W. E. WEBSTER

I.

"MY dear Cynthia, you haven't seen our Hermit yet. He's quite the show exhibit of the place."

Lady Cynthia Stockdale yawned and lit a cigarette. Hermits belonged undoubtedly to the class of things in which she was *not* interested; the word conjured up a mental picture of a dirty individual of great piety, clothed in a sack. And Lady Cynthia loathed dirt and detested piety.

"A hermit, Ada!" she remarked, lazily. "I thought the brand was extinct. Does he feed ravens and things?"

It is to be regretted that theological knowledge was not her strong point, but Ada Laverton, her hostess, did not smile. From beneath some marvellously long eyelashes she was watching the lovely girl lying back in the deck-chair opposite, who was vainly trying to blow smoke rings. A sudden wild idea had come into her brain—so wild as to be almost laughable. But from time immemorial wild ideas anent their girl friends have entered the brains of young married women, especially the lucky ones who have hooked the right man. And Ada Laverton had undoubtedly done that. She alternately bullied, cajoled, and made love to her husband John, in a way that eminently suited that cheerful and easy-going gentleman. He adored her quite openly and ridiculously, and she returned the compliment just as ridiculously, even if not quite so openly.

Moreover, Cynthia Stockdale was her best friend. Before her marriage they had been inseparable, and perhaps there was no one living who understood Cynthia as she did. To the world at large Cynthia was merely a much photographed and capricious beauty. Worthy mothers of daughters, who saw her reproduced weekly in the society papers, sighed inwardly with envy, and commented on the decadence of the aristocracy: the daughters tore out the pictures in a vain endeavour to copy her frocks. But it wasn't the frocks that made Cynthia Stockdale: it was she who made the frocks. Put her in things selected haphazard from a jumble sale—put her in remnants discarded by the people who got it up, and she would still have seemed the best-dressed woman in the room. It was a gift she had—not acquired, but natural.

Lady Cynthia was twenty-five, and looked four years younger. Since the war she had been engaged twice—once to a man in the Blues, and once to a young and ambitious member of Parliament. Neither had lasted long, and on the second occasion people had said unkind things. They had called her heartless and capricious, and she had scorned to contradict them. It mattered nothing to her what people said: if they didn't like her they could go away and have nothing to do with her. And since in her case it wasn't a pose, but the literal truth, people did not go away. Only to Ada Laverton did she give her real confidence: only to Ada Laverton did she show the real soul that lay below the surface.

"I'm trying," she had said, lying in that same chair a year previously, "I'm trying to find the real thing. I needn't marry if I don't want to; I haven't got to marry for a home and a roof. And it's got to be the right man. Of course I may make a mistake—a mistake which I sha'n't find out till it's too late. But surely when one has found it out before it's too late, it's better to acknowledge it at once. It's no good making a second worse one by going through with it. I thought Arthur was all right"—Arthur was the member of Parliament—"I'm

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awfully fond of Arthur still. But I'm not the right wife for him. We jarred on one another in a hundred little ways. And he hasn't got a sense of humour. I shall never forget the shock I got when I first realized that. He seemed to think that a sense of humour consisted of laughing at humorous things, of seeing a jest as well as anyone else. He didn't seem to understand me when I told him that the real sense of humour is often closer to tears than laughter. Besides "—she had added inconsequently—" he had a dreadful trick of whistling down my neck when we danced. No woman can be expected to marry a permanent draught. And as for poor old Bill—well, Bill's an angel. I still adore Bill. He is, I think, the most supremely handsome being I've ever seen in my life—especially when he's got his full dress on. But, my dear, I blame myself over Bill. I ought to have known it before I got engaged to him; as a matter of fact I did know it. Bill is, without exception, the biggest fool in London. I thought his face might atone for his lack of brains; I thought that perhaps if I took him in hand he might do something in the House of Lords—his old father can't live much longer—but I gave it up. He is simply incapable of any coherent thought at all. He can't spell; he can't add, and once when I asked him if he liked Rachmaninoff, he thought it was the man who had built the Pyramids."

This and much more came back to Ada Laverton as she turned over in her mind the sudden wild idea that had come to her. Above all things she wanted to see Cynthia married; she was so utterly happy herself that she longed for her friend to share it too. She knew, as no one else did, what a wonderful wife and pal Cynthia would make to the right man. But it must be the right man; it must be the real thing. And like a blinding flash had come the thought of the Hermit—the Hermit who had come into the neighbourhood six months previously, and taken the little farm standing in the hollow overlooking the sea. For, as she frequently told John, if it hadn't been for the fact that she was tied to a silly old idiot of a husband, she'd have married the Hermit herself.

"No, he doesn't feed ravens," she remarked at length. "Only puppies. He breeds Cairns and Aberdeens. We'll stroll up and see him after tea."

"A hermit breeding dogs!" Cynthia sat up lazily. "My dear, you intrigue me."

"Oh! he's not a bad young man," said Ada Laverton, indifferently. "Quite passable looking, D.S.O. and M.C. and that sort of thing. Been all over the world, and is really quite interesting when you can get him to talk."

"What sort of age?" asked her friend.

"Thirty to thirty-five. You shall see him. But you're not to go and turn his head; he's very peaceful and happy as he is."

Lady Cynthia smiled.

"I don't think hermits are much in my line. A man's job is to be up and doing; not to bury himself alive and breed dogs."

"You tell him so," said her hostess. "It will do him good."

II.

AN excited rush of puppies—fat, bouncing, lolloping puppies; a stern order: "Heel, you young blighters, heel!" in a pleasant, cheerful voice; a laughing greeting from Ada Laverton, and Lady Cynthia Stockdale found herself shaking hands with the Hermit. She shook hands as a man shakes hands, with a firm, steady grasp, and she looked the person she was greeting straight in the eyes. To her that first hand-shake meant, more often than not, the final estimate of a stranger's character; it always meant the first. And her first estimate of Desmond Brooke was good. She saw a man of clear skin and clear eye. He wore no hat, and his brown hair, curling a little at the temples, was slightly flecked with grey. His face was bronzed, and a faint smile hovered in the corners of the eyes that met hers fair and square. His shirt was open at the neck; the sleeves were rolled up, showing a pair of muscular brown arms. He was clean shaven, and his teeth were very white and regular. So much, in detail, she noticed during that first half second; then she turned her attention to the puppies.

"What toppers," she remarked. "What absolute toppers."

She picked a fat, struggling mixture of legs and ecstatically slobbering tongue out of the mêlée at her feet, and the Hermit watched her gravely. It struck him that in the course of a fairly crowded life he had never seen a more lovely picture than the one made by this tall slender girl with the wriggling puppy in her arms. And another thing struck him also, though he said nothing. Possibly it was accidental, but the puppy she had picked up, and which was now making frantic endeavours to lick her face, was out and away the best of the litter. Almost angrily he told himself that it *was* an accident, and yet he could not quite banish the thought that it was an accident which would happen every time. Thoroughbred picks thoroughbred; instinctively the girl would pick the best. His mouth set a little, giving him a look of sternness, and

at that moment their eyes met over the puppy's head.

" Is he for sale ? " asked the girl.

Undoubtedly he was for sale ; Desmond Brooke, though he was in no need of money, did not believe in running anything save on business lines. But now something that he did not stop to analyse made him hesitate. He felt a sudden inconsequent distaste against selling the puppy to her.

" You've picked the best, I see," he said quietly.

" Of course," she answered, with the faintest trace of hauteur. Insensibly she felt that this man was hostile to her.

" I am afraid that that one is not for sale," he continued. " You can have any of the others if you like."

Abruptly she restored the puppy to its mother.

" Having chosen the best, Mr. Brooke," she said, looking him straight in the face, " I don't care about taking anything second-rate."

For a second or two they stared at one another. Ada Laverton had wandered away and was talking shop to the gardener ; the Hermit and Lady Cynthia were alone.

" You surprise me," said the Hermit, calmly.

" That is gratuitously rude," answered the girl quietly. " It is also extremely impertinent. And lastly it shows that you are a very bad judge of character."

The man bowed.

" I sincerely hope that your ' lastly ' is true. Am I to understand, then, that you do not care to buy one of the other puppies ? "

And suddenly the girl laughed half-angrily.

" What do you mean by daring to say such a thing to me ? Why, you haven't known me for more than two minutes."

" That is not strictly true, Lady Cynthia. Anyone who is capable of reading and takes in the illustrated papers can claim your acquaintance weekly."

" I see," she answered. " You disapprove of my poor features being reproduced."

" Personally not at all," he replied. " I know enough of the world, and am sufficiently broadminded, I trust, to realize how completely unimportant the matter is. Lady Cynthia Stockdale at Ascot, at Goodwood, in her motor car, out of her motor car, by the fire, by the gas stove, in her boudoir, out of her boudoir, in the garden, not in the garden—and always in a different frock every time. It doesn't matter to me, but there are some people who haven't got enough money to pay for a doctor's bill when their wives are dying. And it's such a comfort to them to see you by the fire. To know that half the money you paid for your frock would save the life of the woman they love."

" You're talking like a ranting tub-thumper," she cried, furiously. " How dare you say such things to me ? And, anyway, does breeding dogs in the wilderness help them with their doctors' bills ? "

" *Touché*," said the man, with a faint smile. " Perhaps I haven't expressed myself very clearly. You can't pay the bills, Lady Cynthia—I can't. There are too many thousands to pay. But it's the bitter contrast that hits them, and it's all so petty." For a while he paused, seeming to seek for his words. " Come with me, Lady Cynthia, and I'll show you something."

ALMOST violently he swung round on his heel and strode off towards the house. For a moment she hesitated, then she followed him slowly. Anger and indignation were seething in her mind ; the monstrous impertinence of this complete stranger was almost bewildering. She found him standing in his smoking-room unlocking a drawer in a big writing-desk.

" Well," she said uncompromisingly from the doorway.

" I have something to show you," he remarked quietly. " But before I show it to you, I want to tell you a very short story. Three years ago I was in the back of beyond in Brazil. I'd got a bad dose of fever, and the gassing I got in France wasn't helping matters. It was touch and go whether I pulled through or not. And one day one of the fellows got a two-month-old *Tatler*. In that *Tatler* was a picture—a picture of the loveliest girl I have ever seen. I tore it out, and I propped it up at the foot of my bed. I think I worshipped it ; I certainly fell in love with it. There is the picture."

He handed it to her, and she looked at it in silence. It was of herself, and after a moment or two she raised her eyes to his.

" Go on," she said gently.

" A few months ago I came back to England. I found a seething cauldron of discontent ; men out of work—strikes—talk of revolution. And this was the country for which a million of our best had died. I also found—week after week —my picture girl displayed in every paper, as if no such thing as trouble existed. She, in her motor car, cared for none of these things."

" That is unjust," said the girl, and her voice was low.

" I knew it was unjust," answered the man, " but I couldn't help it. And if I couldn't help it—I who loved her—what of these others ? It seemed symbolical to me."

"Nero fiddling," said the girl, with a faint smile. "You're rather a strange person, Mr. Brooke. Am I to understand that you're in love with me?"

"You are not. I'm in love with the you of that picture."

"I see. You have set up an image. And supposing that image is a true one."

"Need we discuss that?" said the man, with faint sarcasm.

The girl shrugged her shoulders.

"The supposition is at least as possible as that you are doing any vast amount of good for the seething cauldron of discontent, I think you called it, by breeding Aberdeens in the country. I'm afraid you're a crank, Mr. Brooke, and not a very consistent one at that. And a crank is to my mind synonymous with a bore."

The man replaced the picture in his desk.

"Then perhaps we had better join Mrs. Laverton," he remarked. "I apologize for having wearied you."

In silence they went out into the garden, to find Ada Laverton wandering aimlessly round looking for them.

"Where have you two been?" she demanded, as she saw them approaching.

"Mr. Brooke has been showing me a relic of his past," said Lady Cynthia. "Most interesting and touching. Are you ready to go, Ada?"

Mrs. Laverton gave a quick glance at their two faces, and wondered what had happened. Not much, surely, in so short a time—and yet with Cynthia you never could tell. The Hermit's face, usually so inscrutable, showed traces of suppressed feeling; Cynthia's was rather too expressionless.

"Are you coming to the ball to-morrow night, Hermit?" she asked.

"I didn't know there was one on, Mrs. Laverton," he answered.

"The Cricket Ball, my good man," she exclaimed. "It's been advertised for the last month."

"But surely Mr. Brooke doesn't countenance anything so frivolous as dancing?" remarked Lady Cynthia. "After the lecture he has just given me on my personal deportment the idea is out of the question."

"Nevertheless I propose to come, Lady Cynthia," said Brooke quietly. "You must forgive me if I have allowed my feelings to run away with me to-day. And perhaps to-morrow you will allow me to find out if the new image is correct—or a pose also."

"What do you mean?" asked the girl, puzzled.

"Lady Cynthia Stockdale—possibly the best dancer in London," he quoted mockingly; "I forget which of the many papers I saw it in."

"Do you propose to pass judgment on my dancing?" she asked.

"If you will be good enough to give me a dance."

For a moment words failed her. The cool, the sublime impertinence of this man literally choked her. Then she nodded briefly.

"I'll give you a dance if you're there in time. And then you can test for yourself, if you're capable of testing."

He bowed without a word, and stood watching them as they walked down the lane.

"I think, Ada, that he's the most detestable man I've ever met," remarked Lady Cynthia furiously, as they turned into the main road.

And Ada Laverton said nothing, but wondered the more.

III.

SHE saw him as soon as she got into the ball-room. It was the last day but one of the local cricket week, and the room was crowded. A large number of the men she knew—men she had danced with in London who had come down to play—and within half a minute she was surrounded. It was a chance of getting a dance with her which was not to be missed; in London she generally danced with one or at the most two men for the whole evening—men who were absolutely perfect performers. For dancing was a part of Lady Cynthia's life—and a big part.

The humour of the situation had struck her that day. For this dog-breeding crank to presume to judge her powers of dancing seemed too sublimely funny for annoyance. But he deserved to be taught a very considerable lesson. And she proposed to teach him. After that she proposed to dismiss him completely from her mind.

She gave him a cool nod as he came up, and frowned slightly as she noticed the faint glint of laughter in his eyes. Really Mr. Desmond Brooke was a little above himself. So much the worse for him.

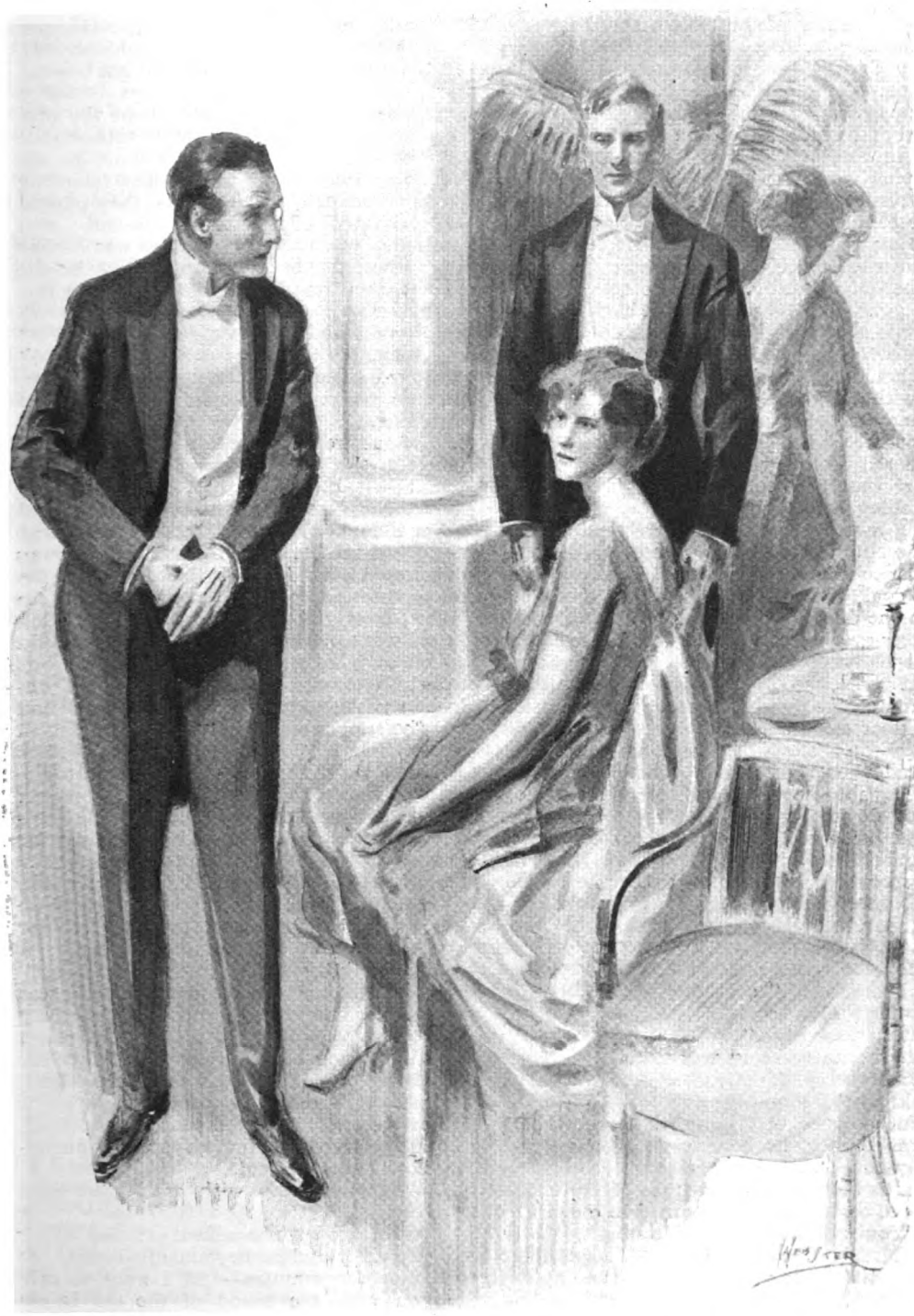
"I don't know whether you'll find one or not," she remarked carelessly, handing him her programme.

He glanced at it without a word, and quietly erased someone's name.

"I've made special arrangements with the band for Number 9, Lady Cynthia," he remarked coolly. "A lot of people will be in at supper then, so we ought to have the floor more to ourselves."

The next instant he had bowed and disappeared, leaving her staring speechlessly at her programme.

"A breezy customer," murmured a man beside her. "Who is he?"



" This is mine, old thing," spluttered Tubby. " Number Nine."
" I think not," said the Hermit, quietly. " I fixed Number Nine specially with Lady Cynthia yesterday."

"A gentleman who is going to have the biggest lesson of his life," she answered ominously, and the man laughed. He knew Lady Cynthia—and he knew Lady Cynthia's temper when it was roused. But for once he was wrong in his diagnosis; the outward and visible signs were there all right—the inward and mental state of affairs in keeping with them was not. For the first time in her life Lady Cynthia felt at a loss. Her partners found her *distraite* and silent; as a matter of fact she was barely conscious of their existence. And the more she lashed at herself mentally, the more confused did she get.

IT was preposterous, impossible. Why should she cut Tubby Dawlish to dance with a crank who kept dogs? A crank, moreover, who openly avowed that his object was to see if she could dance. Every now and then she saw him lounging by the door watching her. She knew he was watching her, though she gave no sign of being aware of his existence. And all the while Number 9 grew inexorably nearer.

Dance indeed! She would show him how she could dance. And as a result she fell into the deadly fault of trying. No perfect dancer ever *tries* to dance; they just dance. And Lady Cynthia knew that better than most people. Which made her fury still rise more against the man standing just outside the door smoking a cigarette. A thousand times—no; she would not cut Tubby.

And then she realized that people were moving into supper; that the 8 was being taken down from the band platform—that 9 was being put up. And she realized that Desmond Brooke the Hermit was crossing the room towards her; was standing by her side while Tubby—like an outraged terrier—was glaring at him across her.

"This is mine, old thing," spluttered Tubby. "Number 9."

"I think not," said the Hermit quietly. "I fixed Number 9 specially with Lady Cynthia yesterday."

She hesitated—and was lost.

"I'm sorry, Tubby," she said a little weakly. "I forgot."

Not a trace of triumph showed on the Hermit's face, as he gravely watched the indignant back of his rival retreating towards the door: not a trace of expression showed on his face as he turned to the girl.

"You've been trying to-night, Lady Cynthia," he said gravely. "Please don't—this time. It's a wonderful tune this—half waltz, half tango. It was lucky finding Lopez conducting: he has played for me before. And I want you just to forget everything except the smell of the passion flowers coming in through the open windows, and the thrumming of the guitars played by the natives under the palm-trees." His eyes were looking into hers, and suddenly she drew a deep breath. Things had got beyond her.

It was marked as a fox-trot on the programme, and several of the more enthusiastic performers were waiting to get off on the stroke of time. But as the first haunting notes of the dance wailed out—they paused and hesitated. This was no fox-trot; this was—but what matter what it was? For after the first bar no one moved in the room: they stood motionless watching one couple—Lady Cynthia Stockdale and an unknown man.

"Why, it's the fellow who breeds dogs," muttered someone to his partner, but there was no reply. She was too engrossed in watching.

And as for Lady Cynthia, from the moment she felt Desmond Brooke's arm round her, the world had become merely movement — such movement as she had never thought of before. To say that he was a perfect dancer would be idle: he was dancing itself. And the band, playing as men possessed, played for them and them only. Everything was forgotten: nothing in the world mattered save that they should go on and on and on—dancing. She was utterly unconscious of the crowd of onlookers: she didn't know that people had left the supper-room and were thronging in at the door: she knew nothing save that she had never danced before. Dimly she realized at last that the music had stopped: dimly she heard a great roar of applause—but only dimly. It seemed to come from far away—the shouts of "Encore" seemed hazy and dream-like. They had left the ballroom, though she was hardly conscious of where he was taking her, and when he turned to her and said, "Get a wrap or something: I want to talk to you out in God's fresh air," she obeyed him without a word. He was waiting for her when she returned, standing motionless where she had left him. And still in silence he led the way to his car which had been left apart from all the others, almost as if he had expected to want it before the end. For a moment she hesitated, for Lady Cynthia, though utterly unconventional, was no fool.

"Will you come with me?" he said gravely.

"Where to?" she asked.

"Up to the cliffs beyond my house. It will take ten minutes—and I want to talk to you with the sound of the sea below us."

"You had the car in readiness?" she said quietly.

"For both of us—or for me alone," he

answered. " If you won't come, then I go home. Will you come with me ? " he repeated.

" Yes ; I will come."

He helped her into the car and wrapped a rug round her ; then he climbed in beside her. And as they swung out of the little square, the strains of the next dance followed them from the open windows of the Town Hall.

HE drove as he danced—perfectly ; and in the dim light the girl watched his clear-cut profile as he stared ahead into the glare of the head-lights. Away to the right his farm flashed by, the last house before they reached the top of the cliffs. And gradually, above the thrumming of the engine, she heard the lazy boom of the big Atlantic swell on the rocks ahead. At last he stopped where the road ran parallel to the top of the cliff, and switched off the lights.

" Well," she said, a little mockingly, " is the new image correct or a pose ? "

" You dance divinely," he answered gravely. " More divinely than any woman I have ever danced with, and I have danced with those who are reputed to be the show dancers of the world. But I didn't ask you to come here to talk about dancing ; I asked you to come here in order that I might first apologize, and then say Good-bye."

The girl gave a little start, but said nothing.

" I talked a good deal of rot to you yesterday," he went on, after a moment. " You were justified in calling me a ranting tub-thumper. But I was angry with myself, and when one is angry with oneself one does foolish things. I know as well as you do just how little society photographs mean : that was only a peg to hang my inexcusable tirade on. You see, when one has fallen in love with an ideal—as I fell in love with that picture of you, all in white in the garden at your father's place—and you treasure that ideal for three years, it jolts one to find that the ideal is different to what you thought. I fell in love with a girl in white, and sometimes in the wilds I've seen visions and dreamed dreams. And then I found her a lovely being in Paquin's most expensive frocks ; a social celebrity : a household name. And then I met her, and knew my girl in white had gone. What matter that it was the inexorable rule of Nature that she must go : what matter that she had changed into an incredibly lovely woman ? She had gone : my dream girl had vanished. In her place stood Lady Cynthia Stockdale—the well-known society beauty. Reality had come—and I was angry with you for having killed my dream—angry with myself for having to wake up.

" Such is my apology," he continued gravely. " Perhaps you will understand : I think you will understand. And just because I was angry with you, I made you dance with me to-night. I said to myself : ' I will show Lady Cynthia Stockdale that the man who loved the girl in white can meet her successor on her own ground.' That's the idea I started with, but things went wrong halfway through the dance. The anger died ; in its place there came something else. Even my love for the girl in white seemed to become a bit hazy ; I found that the successor had supplanted her more completely than I realized. And since the successor has the world at her feet—why, the breeder of dogs will efface himself, for his own peace of mind. So, good-bye, Lady Cynthia—and the very best of luck. If it won't bore you I may say that I'm not really a breeder of dogs by profession. This is just an interlude ; a bit of rest spent with the most wonderful pals in the world. I'm getting back to harness soon : voluntary harness, I'm glad to say, as the shekels don't matter. But anything one can do towards greasing the wheels, and helping those priceless fellows who gave everything without a murmur during the war, and who are up against it now—is worth doing."

And still she said nothing, while he backed the car on to the grass beside the road, and turned it the way they had come. A jumble of strange thoughts were in her mind ; a jumble out of which there stuck one dominant thing—the brown tanned face of the man beside her. And when he stopped the car by his own farm and left her with a word of apology, she sat quite motionless staring at the white streak of road in front. At last she heard his footsteps coming back along the drive, and suddenly a warm wriggling bundle was placed in her lap—a bundle which slobbered joyfully and then fell on the floor with an indignant yelp.

" The puppy," he said quietly. " Please take him." And very softly under his breath he added : " The best to the best."

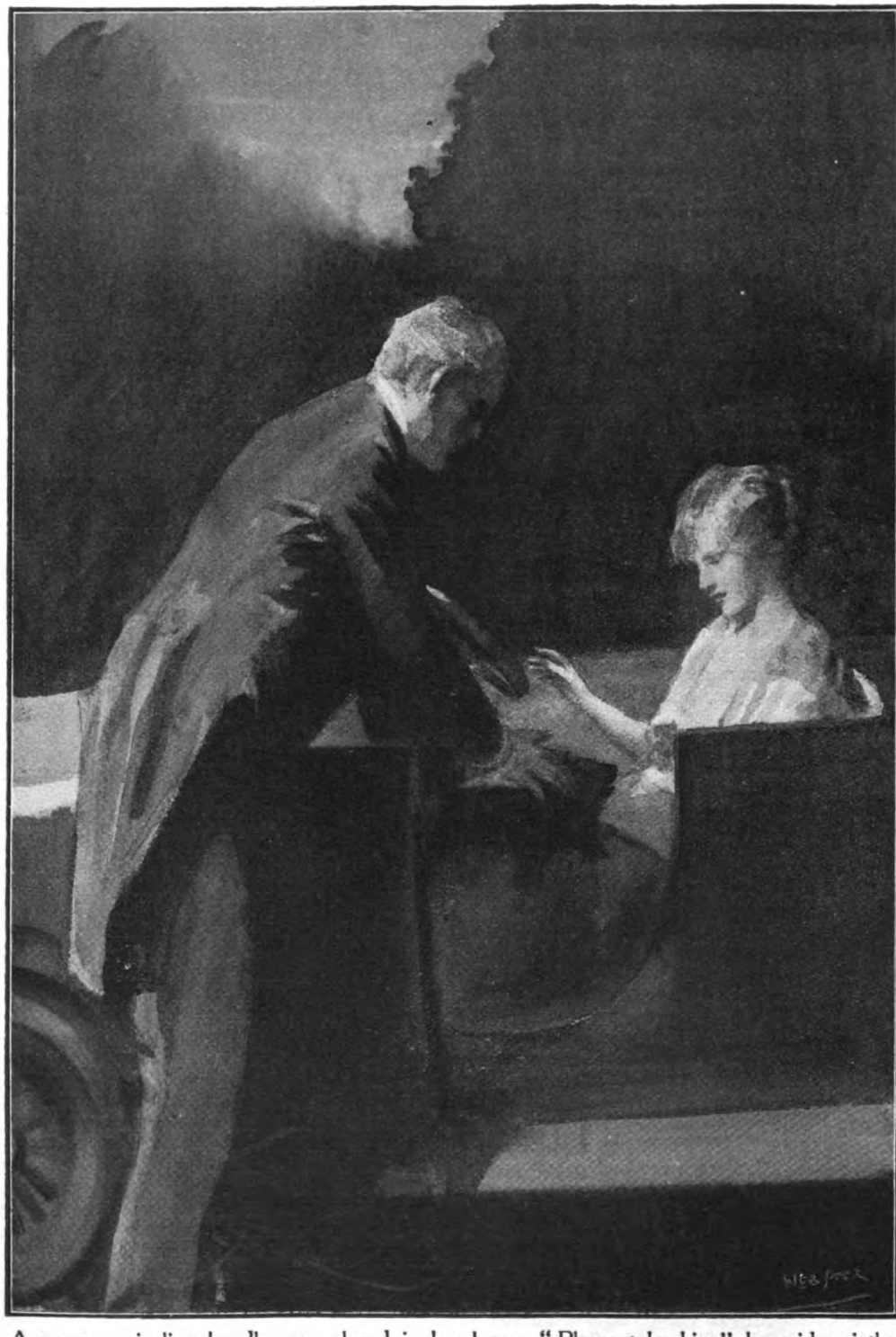
But she heard him, and even as she stooped to lift the puppy on to her knees, her heart began to beat madly. She knew : at last, she knew.

" I'll take you back to the dance," he was saying, " and afterwards I'll deposit that young rascal at Mrs. Laverton's house."

And then for the first time she spoke.

" Please go to Ada's house first. Afterwards we'll see about the dance."

He bowed and swung the car left-handed through the lodge-gates.



A warm, wriggling bundle was placed in her lap. "Please take him," he said, quietly. And very softly under his breath he added: "The best to the best."

" Will you wait for me ? " she said, as he pulled up at the front door.

" As long as you like," he answered courteously.

" Because I may be some time," she continued a little unevenly. " And don't wait for me here : wait for me where the drive runs through that little copse, half way down to the lodge."

The next instant she had disappeared into the house, with the puppy in her arms. Why by the little copse, wondered the man as he slowly drove the car down the drive ? The butler had seen them already, so what did it matter ? He pulled up the car in the shadow of a big oak tree, and lit a cigarette. Then, with his arms resting on the steering wheel, he sat staring in front of him. He had done a mad thing, and she'd taken it wonderfully well. He always had done mad things all his life ; he was made that way. But this was the maddest he had ever done. With a grim smile he pictured her infuriated partners, waiting in serried rows by the door, cursing him by all their gods. And then the smile faded, and he sighed, while his knuckles gleamed white on the wheel. If only she wasn't so gloriously pretty ; if only she wasn't so utterly alive and wonderful. Well—it was the penalty of playing with fire ; and it had been worth it. Yes ; it had been worth it—even if the wound never quite healed.

" *A fool there was, and he made his prayer.* . . . "

He pitched his cigarette away, and suddenly he stiffened and sat motionless, while something seemed to rise in his throat and choke him, and the blood hammered hotly at his temples. A girl in white was standing not five feet from him on the fringe of the little wood : a girl holding a puppy in her arms. And then he heard her speaking.

" It's not the same frock—but it's the nearest I can do."

She came up to the car, and once again over the head of the puppy their eyes met.

" I've been looking," she said steadily, " for the real thing. I don't *think* I've found it—I *know* I have."

" My dear ! " he stammered hoarsely. " Oh ! my dear dream girl."

" Take me back to the cliff, Desmond," she whispered. " Take me back to our cliff."

And an outraged puppy, bouncing off the running-board on to a stray fir-cone, viewed the proceedings of the next five minutes with silent displeasure.

ACROSTICS.

Our twenty-first series of acrostics begins with No. 109, printed below, and will run for four months. Prizes to the value of twelve guineas will be awarded to the most successful solvers.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 109.

Leaving town and work behind,
Leaving care of every kind,
Simple joys in life we prize—
Cloudless days and sunny skies.

1. Red was suit of thievish knave.
2. Greater part of Gallic grave.
3. Classic tongue, of bygone time.
4. Cornish saint, in riddling rhyme.
5. Mild expletive, mostly tree.
6. Elsewhere—oft a useful plea.
7. Money, turn a marshal round.
8. Scottish isle with heavenly sound.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 109 *should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor,* The Strand Magazine, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on August* 10*th. They must be written on half-sheets of notepaper, or on cards ; at the foot of the solution must appear the solver's pseudonym, and (except in the case of postcards) nothing else. Flimsy paper should not be used.*

One alternative answer may be sent to each light.

Answer to Double Acrostic No. 108.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 108.

In either, or in neither, of two lands.
On railway, river, and the sea it stands.

1. Look down below the level of your feet
   To find the complement of Water Street.
2. Professionally one is treated here.
   And same will, rightly rearranged, appear.
3. Let gage appear of other hue than green.
   Fair ladies closely linked there may be seen.
4. Easy it ought to be to find the place ;
   You ought to turn it up, if such the case.
5. What sounds as though 'twere meant in very deed ?
   A shorter synonym we here should read.
6. Honey and milk, no doubt, he used to take ;
   Tea in a can would not be hard to make.
7. These may suggest it : Ferry, heather, rocks,
   Covenant, silver button, uncle, fox.

PAX.

1.	B	akerlo	O
2.	E	adsma	N
3.	R	edgauntle	T
4.	W	icklo	W
5.	I	nsan	E
6.	C	anaanit	E
7.	K	idnappe	D

Notes.—Light 1. Baker Street and Waterloo. 2. Headsman, beheaded. Anagram, and same. 3. Gage, gauntlet. Fairladies, the house in Scott's novel. 4. Turn up the wick, if low. 5. De-ment-ed : the central syllable, sounding as though 'twere the word " meant," inside the word " deed." 6. Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey. Anagram, tea in a can. 7. Stevenson's novel.

The fourth light of No. 106 can be read in more than one way, and " Nook " must be admitted as correct, with any spelling variation.

HOW TO MAKE THE BEST OF LIFE

by

Arnold Bennett

IV.—STARTING IN LIFE.

SERVICES *v.* SALARY.

NEARLY all young people who go into the world in order to exchange their talents for a livelihood begin as *employés*. And most of them remain *employés* to the end of their working days. That is to say, the great majority of us are dependent upon the approval and the goodwill of somebody else for the safety of our existence in that dangerous and shifting piece of human mechanism which we call society. Commonly the inexperienced youth (in which word, as usual, I include both young men and young women) enters employment with the excellent intention of doing his best—of giving himself generously in return for his fixed wages. And the first thing he commonly discovers is that his fellow-*employés* are not doing their best. He perceives, or his companions sharply bring to his attention, that the spirit of the place is against generosity in the matter of services. The theory is that since the employer is "out" to give as little as possible, the proper course for the *employés* is to give as little as possible. The employer pays a certain calculable sum, while expecting an equivalent in services which are not calculable, which are elastic, and which the employer will assuredly stretch as far as he can. The affair develops into a sort of double conspiracy, the employer and the *employés* plotting against each other.

"Why on earth," the *employés* demand, "should we do more than we need do, when the result is solely to enrich the employer? If we really put our backs into the business, will the employer at the end of the week put his back into the business of suitably rewarding us? He will not. He will pay us exactly the same amount as if we had not tired our backs. He may smile his thanks, or even murmur some praise, but smiles and praise will purchase neither cigarettes nor silk stockings. Therefore——" etc., etc.

There is a sort of rough justice in the argument, and the beginner usually accepts it at its face value and acts accordingly. Nevertheless, the policy is a mistake from the *employé's* point of view. True, the *employé* who does his best will, in the case of nineteen *employés* out of twenty, give more than he receives, and to other *employés* he will have the air of a philanthropist. But he will not continue for very long to give more than he receives; for he will either receive promotion in the place where he is, or he will find a better situation in some other place. The rumour of a good active *employé* soon spreads abroad, the reason being that good, active *employés* are very rare.

Yes, they are very rare indeed, and the secret preoccupation of every employer is to find them and stick to them. Such an *employé*, in a period of trade crisis, will be retained after many others have been politely thrown into the street. Such an *employé* has a powerful weapon against an employer in that he is terribly difficult to replace. He may have faults—he may be dull, stupid, slow, bad-tempered, churlish—but his willingness to work, his readiness not to dole out his energy but to lavish his

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energy, will weigh advantageously against these defects. He is steadily moving along towards *security*, perhaps the asset most highly treasured in the employed world. He may be giving during the week more than he receives from his employer on Saturday, but in fact he is, in all probability, receiving quite as much as he gives, though something —not money—of what he receives costs the employer nothing.

Moreover, the transaction should not be viewed simply as a transaction between the *employé* and the employer. It is also a transaction between the *employé* and society at large. And, seen in this light, it will appear less unjust, even in the monetary sense. Justice cannot be calculated and balanced up week by week, nor year by year. In practice it is achieved by decades, or in half a lifetime or a lifetime. The reward of energy seldom comes immediately. It often lags ten years behind ; it generally lags five years behind. A man advanced in life may seem to be overpaid for what he is doing at a given moment. But at that moment he is, actually, being paid for what he did years earlier. And when we see, as we not seldom do, old men apparently obtaining large salaries for light labour, we should bear this in mind. What they are being paid for is their reputation, their reliability, their experience, their reserves of skill and force ready for emergencies which may arise.

Hence the young *employé* will be well advised not to ladle out his energy with a teaspoon, nor to weigh it continually in scales against immediate money. He possesses energy in plenty, and he must fling it around as some millionaires do coin. He must take the risk of not getting the ultimate reward. He must not think in short periods, but in very long periods. He must sow the seeds of oaks, not of virginia creepers, and exercise that immense patience which the growth of acorns demands.

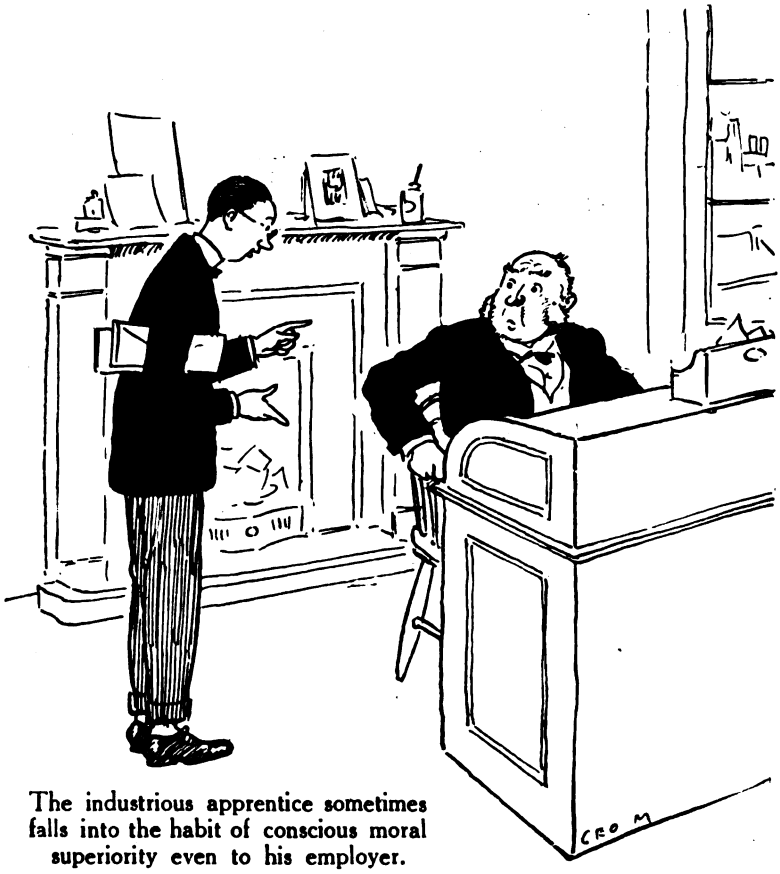
Of course it will be objected that if all *employés* conducted themselves according to this advice, none of them would get the advantages of it, while the employer would be on velvet. True ! No answer can be put forward to this objection, It need not, however, trouble us, because there is not the

Most of them remain *employés* to the end of their working days.

slightest chance of all *employés*, or of the majority of *employés*, conducting themselves according to the aforesaid advice. The advice will be welcomed by all, but acted upon by few, and I am not going to pretend anything else.

The few who do act upon it should remember that in nothing is tact more necessary than in well-doing. Idleness in an *employé* will cause no unpleasantness with his fellow-*employés* unless they are compelled to do the idler's work for him, and should this happen, the idler will soon be in urgent need of a situation. If the idler's idleness inconveniences nobody but the employer, the other *employés* will endure the employer's misfortune with the utmost fortitude and tranquillity, and the idler will get on very well with them, possibly even coming in for a certain amount of admiration. But the truly "industrious apprentice" must take care. If he does not exercise diplomacy, tact, and the subtlety of serpents, he will be passively, and perhaps actively, disliked, for the obvious reason that he is setting up a new and more exacting standard for all his fellows, inspiring the employer to criticize them with sharper eyes, and generally disturbing the eternal order of things. Sin has its penalties, but so has righteousness. Moreover, righteousness is very apt to be called, and to develop into, self-righteousness.

And let not the industrious apprentice suppose that the employer will like him all the more for thus unsettling the entire place by his splendid endeavours. The reverse will be the case. The employer would doubtless be willing to sack the whole of the rest of the staff if he could replace every individual by an industrious apprentice. But he cannot, and he knows he cannot. Meanwhile he desires above everything harmony.



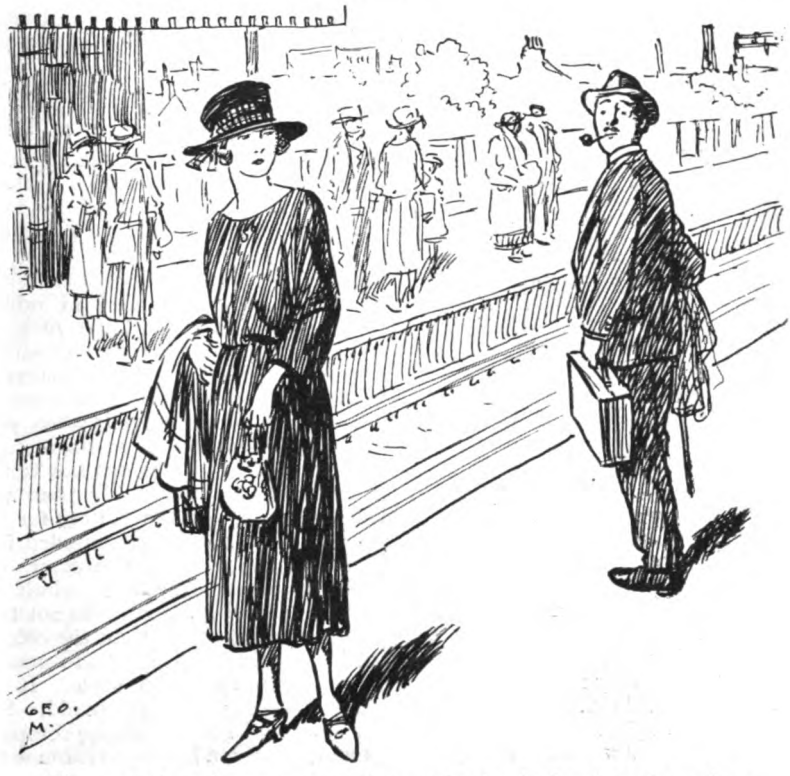
The industrious apprentice sometimes falls into the habit of conscious moral superiority even to his employer.

Again, the industrious apprentice sometimes falls into the habit of conscious moral superiority even to his employer, who perhaps is a bit of a slacker himself. He may go so far as to put his employer in the wrong. Now employers, like princes, are never wrong. Therefore, let the industrious apprentice go warily. The art of dealing with one's employer and the art of dealing with one's fellow-*employés* are scarcely less important than the art of dealing with the work itself.

This is not cynicism, merely sense.

A last point in this connection. If the energetic, conscientious, generous, and tactful *employé* is also very ambitious, he will, sooner or later, and probably sooner than later, be confronted with the problem: "Shall I stay where I am, or shall I be adventurous and go somewhere else?" To my mind the answer is clear. He should not stay where he is. The man who remains long in one situation sinks into a groove; he fails to acquire new experience; and he

loses elasticity and enterprise. And as the years pass, he grows older and the fresh openings diminish in number. Also, he becomes afraid. Employers usually hesitate about engaging an *employé* who has not budged for a long period. They fear his fixed habits. They know that he will not and cannot respond easily to unfamiliar suggestions. This state of affairs is naturally well known to the employer under whom the *employé* has been for many years. The employer, though he does not wish the *employé* to leave him, feels that he has that hold over him which time alone can give, and inevitably the feeling influences his attitude towards the *employé*. The ambitious *employé* who knows himself to possess fundamental character must avoid grooves with all his heart and must, while showing prudence, face risks.



The majority of young men first seriously think of saving when they set eyes on a young woman who pleases their fancy in an unusual degree.

Seldom does it occur that a genuine improvement of status can be attained without facing risks. There are scores of fine opportunities round about any ambitious *employé*. They are useless until they are explored, and not a solitary one of them can be explored unless the *employé* is prepared to burn his boats. Nearly all very successful men have burnt their boats, not once but several times. They have continually explored opportunities, now and then with lamentable temporary results. They have gone on. Their lives have been dramatic, and often melodramatic. Great success cannot be achieved without serious risks, and therefore without the abandonment of security.

But not all energetic *employés* of sound character are ambitious. Many of them are quite unambitious, and want security first and last. Security assured, they will toil hard and often use considerable brains in order to make it the most comfortable sort of security, but they will not exchange security for no matter how many tickets in the gleaming lottery of the world. They have not the quality of adventurousness. The advice against inhabiting grooves does not apply to this non-adventurous category of excellence.

THE EXCHEQUER.

The trouble about discussing how to make the best of life is that one is forced to make so many excursions into the obvious. The failure to make the best of life is due, as often as not, to the neglect of the conspicuously obvious—to the omission to do some perfectly simple thing which everybody agrees ought to be done, or to the commission of some perilous imprudence which everybody agrees ought to be very carefully avoided. It is as if, before entering a house, the candidate for success had to be warned not to try to walk through a closed and locked door, or, having begun to live in the house, had to be exhorted to take his clothes off at night and put them on in the morning, to eat at

regular intervals, to refrain from debauchery—had even to be told that in order to sustain life he must breathe.

Now, for the youth starting upon an independent existence, extracting for the first time a livelihood from the world, depending on his own efforts for all his own necessaries and luxuries, there is one elementary safeguard which he positively ought to take. I hesitate to name it, because it is so elementary. I blush to name it, and yet I am bound to name it, for the reason that a very large proportion of people calmly and persistently ignore it. He positively ought to save. You all agree, of course. Naturally and inevitably, he ought to save. The whole adult population of the civilized globe is aware of that! But does he in fact save? I will tell you. The majority of young men first seriously think of saving when they set eyes on a young woman who pleases their fancy in an unusual degree. When the greatest force in Nature compels the average young man to admit in his heart that he is undone unless he becomes the husband of a particular girl, and makes himself responsible for her future as well as his own, then he says to himself, with the effect of a sudden, startling discovery:—

"By Jove! I must begin saving at once!"

And he begins. It is rather late in the day, for he does not want a long engagement, and you cannot ordinarily purchase the furniture of a love-nest out of the savings of six months or a year—hence the hire-purchase system!—but, thank Heaven, he does begin. A shock has revealed to him, at any rate, one profound economic truth which had been staring him in the face perhaps for years, but which he had in some mysterious way failed to see. The shock was equivalent to an operation for cataract. I am less sure about the thrift of young women, but my impression is that it is not superior to that of young men.

From the first moment when he assumes control of his budget, the youth ought to commence saving, and he ought consistently to continue to save. No matter how small his revenue, he ought to save. If saving involves depriving himself of cigarettes, cinemas, fancy socks, or butter upon his bread, still he ought to save, he ought to perform a miracle and save. He may be able to save only a very little, a trifle, a mere nothing—he ought to save. It is the habit of saving that counts, not the sum saved.

Savings are a weapon which no one can afford to disdain. The world is a dark forest infested by brigands and tigers; savings are the gun of defence. Without savings a man is at the mercy of an illness, an accident, a war, a trade collapse, the caprice of an employer. And there are tens of thousands of individuals, and not only young individuals, in London and New York to-day who have nothing between themselves and calamity but the coins in their pockets and the wages due to them next Saturday. This is a strange and very disconcerting fact, but a fact it is. The bulk of these tens of thousands of individuals are careless fools, guilty of the lunacy of the man who smokes a cigarette in a petrol store. It is all obvious. Yet, though I blush for writing it down, I do not apologize.

Further, and in addition to saving in liquid money, the youth ought to insure his life. Insurance companies, who have cultivated the craft of plausibility to an amazing degree, affirm to the youth that it is cheaper to insure oneself when young. I once asked an insurance manager to explain to me why insurance companies treated the young man more favourably than the old. I inquired whether they did it for the fun of the thing or from a high-minded intention to improve the moral character of the race. He naturally had to admit in reply that insurance companies do not treat the young more favourably than the old, and that they treat people of all ages in precisely the same hard, business-like style. It is not cheaper to insure young than old. So far as his relations with the insurance company goes, the insured person has no advantage whatever in insuring young. He pays lower premiums, but he pays more of them; the insurance company gets the same amount of money in the end.

As regards himself, however, the youth has a very considerable advantage in insuring. To insure is a dodge for compelling himself to save. Further, an insurance policy provides automatically the readiest and cheapest method of borrowing money that exists. I do not urge the youth to borrow money; I hope that he will not borrow money; but cases of forced borrowing to meet disagreeable and totally unexpected crises do, I believe, occur! Another advantage of the insurance policy, in the United Kingdom, is that the premiums paid can be deducted from income-tax returns. A few years ago income-tax was something that youths had only heard of. To-day, happy is the youth who has not come into affrighting contact with the Income-tax Collector!

The varieties of insurance are many; but they may be divided roughly into two classes, the policy payable at death and the "endowment" policy. The latter is payable at a given age, or at death if it happens earlier, or after the payment of an agreed number of premiums. The endowment policy seems to me to be preferable to the policy payable at death. It is very conceivable that one may seriously need money at the age of fifty or sixty, and if fortunately one does not, one

can always re-invest the assured sum in another policy, or in other ways known to science. And it occurs not infrequently that the insured person survives the relatives for whose sake he has insured himself: in which case he may have a longing to handle the money in his own lifetime; he may go so far as to ask of what use the money will be to him in the grave where bodily needs are so few and luxuries so superfluous.

The above two points are not, perhaps, the major essentials of the youth's budget; but they are essentials which for years are neglected more frequently than any other essentials, and that is why I have given prominence to them.

As for the individual budget generally, I will merely say that it must be conceived and planned as a whole, as a life's career must be conceived and planned, with a right sense of proportion, and with two eyes upon the main objects of existence. One part must not be starved at the expense of another. Pinching will be unavoidable; inadequacy will be unavoidable; but the pinching and the inadequacy must be equally distributed. For example, I would not advise a youth to abandon smoking entirely in order to buy books (unless, of course, smoking is unpleasant to him). I would advise him to miss a book occasionally in order to buy a cigarette occasionally—while counting his cigarettes a hundred times more strictly than his books.

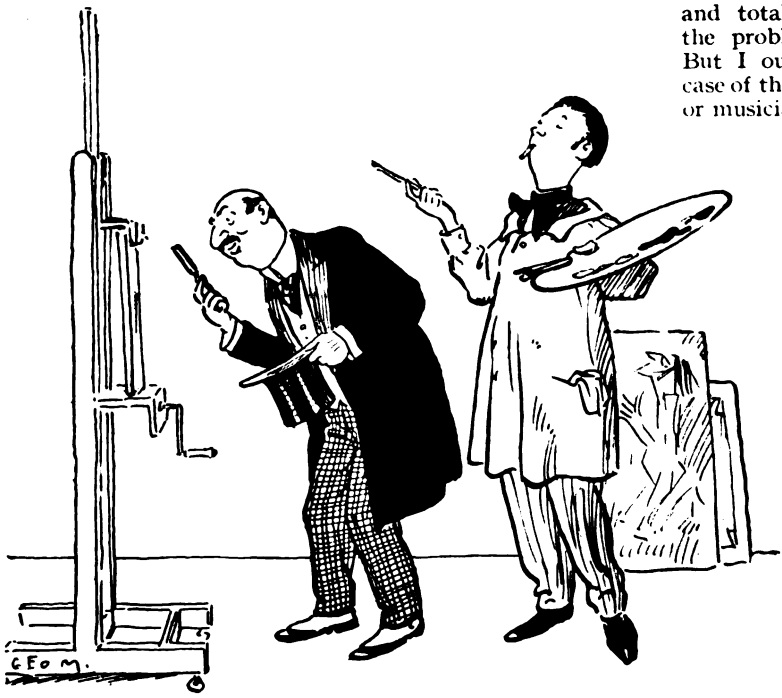
He will deliberately and with misrepresentation borrow money from defrauded friends.

THE HIGHER LIFE AND THE LOWER.

And now I want to put myself right, beyond the chance of misunderstanding, with those who may think that I am stressing too much the material part of existence, and who may be likely to say that there are far more important matters in life than income and expenditure, and that these matters, being more important, should come first. I agree that the moral, intellectual, artistic, and emotional parts of life have more to do with happiness and right living than the merely material. I agree, for example, that it is more important for a man to act justly and benevolently towards his fellows than for him to manage his budget scientifically, to eat good food, to lie on a comfortable bed, or to be well dressed according to his own station. But I maintain that it is quite possible, and indeed proper, for a man to attend to all sides of his life, and that exactly as the mental existence must depend primarily on the physical existence, the whole of the finer and more exalted activities must be based upon a sound material activity.

Further, I maintain that to earn one's living skilfully and well, and to spend or save one's money in the same way, satisfies a fundamental natural instinct which cannot be satisfied otherwise. All the vague talk which one hears about living on a higher plane and despising the material plane is to my mind dangerously wrong-headed. Nobody can live on the higher plane without living also on the material plane. Nobody can cut himself off from the material plane and swim, as it were, unsupported in a spiritual atmosphere. The thing is against Nature, and patently absurd.

Take the extreme case of a religious community which exists for contemplation, prayer, redemption, and everlasting welfare, and the members of which are said to have "cut themselves off from the world." They have not cut themselves off from the world. I say nothing whatever against such communities, which may well be performing a very lofty function in the immensely complex organism of human society. But the members thereof have not cut themselves off from the world, nor from the material system of the world. The clothes they wear, the food they eat, the coal that warms them, the chairs they sit on, the buildings they inhabit, are all an immediate product of the material system. They have been made by human



The fact that this young man may produce something good now and then is beside the point.

units of the material system. If the community enjoys an income, as it does, that income is material; it springs from material activities, and it is possessed by the community because somebody who amassed the capital or obtained the land by purely material activities thought fit to make a present of it to the community. If the material system goes wrong, and in so far as it goes wrong, the higher activities of the community will go wrong. And, in fact, it is well known that the directing heads of such communities are deeply occupied, and must be deeply occupied, by material questions. And they occupy themselves with material questions to the end that the higher activities which they control may smoothly prosper. Instead of being cut off from the material world they are closely engaged within the material world; and they have a reputation, not undeserved, for exceptional ability in the conduct of material affairs. And they are quite right.

Many other instances might be given of repudiation of the material part of existence which is not in fact repudiation at all. I need not enlarge upon the case of the fashionable lady with a husband making fifty thousand a year out of the commercial system, two houses, three motor-cars, and thirty servants, who gives herself ecstatically and totally to the study of the problems of spiritualism. But I ought to mention the case of the young poet, painter, or musician, with a passion for his art, who scorns what he probably calls the "gross materialism" of the world which he adorns. I have met many specimens of this young man. In the first place he is generally in debt. That is to say, he has entered into commercial contracts—for the occupation of a studio, the purchase of meat and beer, the hire of a piano—which contracts he has broken. In other words he is dishonest, having got what he could out of the despised materialism and then omitted to pay for it. Or in still other words, he has by false pretences contrived to cause human units in the commercial system to labour for his well-being while doing nothing himself for them in return. This young man will deliberately and with misrepresentation borrow money from defrauded friends, which money comes directly out of the commercial system.

And though he may exhibit a certain carelessness about his meals and his bed, he often depends very much upon the quality and quantity of his drinks, and he nearly always depends absolutely upon his cigarettes, which cigarettes are gross, physical cigarettes, manufactured and distributed by human units in the commercial system, on the clear understanding that the business shall help to keep together the souls and bodies of those human units.

The young man is frequently very idle, because he has never taken the trouble to organize his physical life; and his days being unorganized, irregular, and mainly empty, he develops into a capricious creature with a gradually decreasing control over his lower instincts. And even so, in as far as he continues to exist, he is utterly dependent on the physical mechanisms which he affects to scorn while defrauding them.

The fact that this young man may produce something good, or even a masterpiece, now

and then, is beside the point. He will produce whatever he produces in spite and not because of his dishonest philosophy of life. He would certainly produce much more and much better if he had had the sense to realize that only gasbags can idly float in the air—and even they for not more than a limited period !

DESPISING SMALL THINGS.

I would not like to attach an undue importance to the business of " getting on " in a material sense. There are human beings—and they may be very fine human beings, they may be the finest of all human beings—who have no worldly ambition and only the least possible interest in the physical side of life, using the word " physical " in a wide significance. They find the satisfaction of their best instincts in the mind and the soul ; it is a matter of indifference to them whether they are employers or employed, whether they are counted successful or unsuccessful, whether they clean their own boots or are waited upon by innumerable menials, whether they eat bread or caviare, whether they live in palaces or huts, whether they spend two hundred or twenty thousand a year. Such human beings, though they suffer the inevitable disadvantages of being peculiar, are singularly fortunate, partly because they are singularly independent and partly because the quality of the happiness they strive after and often achieve is purely spiritual or intellectual.

But even these cannot safely neglect the physical basis of existence ; they cannot safely muddle their budgets, and if by carelessness or self-conceit they take more from the physical world than they give to the physical world, their ideals will be smirched and they will suffer in precisely that which is most precious to them.

And for the far larger number of us, who wish to succeed in a general way, whether in commerce, the learned professions, the arts or the sciences, the proper organization of the budget, the common matter-of-fact worldly budget, should be the first pre-occupation. The relations of any individual with the world at large are decided, not by the private canons of the individual, but by the canons of the world at large.

None of us can deal with the world in his own terms. Security must be paid for by the strictest adherence to the principles laid down by the experience of mankind gathered and matured through scores of centuries. If those principles are ignored friction will be the certain result, and the amount of the friction will vary with the extent of the ignoring. Friction, no matter how simple or absurd its origin, will interfere with and sometimes scotch the highest activities of the brain. If a youth, endeavouring to live rightly, omits to have his boots mended he may catch a chill on a wet day which will spoil his chances for a crucial examination. How can anybody devote himself wholly to the pursuit of a vast scheme involving his whole career if his mind is to be continually pulled away from the supreme subject by petty anxieties about rent-day, or the bill at the grocer's, or the painful condition of teeth whose warnings have been disregarded ? He simply cannot. The proposition has only to be stated to carry conviction. The biggest things in life depend on the smallest things. That is why the smallest things, the prosaic and humdrum things, the things that superior spirits are so apt impatiently to scorn, need to be handled with the same efficiency as the greatest things.

Next Month: " Falling in Love."

BERTIE CHANGES HIS MIND

by

P·G·WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY
A·WALLIS MILLS

IT has happened so frequently in the past few years that young fellows starting in my profession have come to me for a word of advice, that I've found it convenient now to condense my system into a brief formula. "Resource and Tact"—that is my motto. Tact, of course, has always been with me a *sine qua non:* while as for resource, I think I may say that I have usually contrived to show a certain modicum of what I might call *finesse* in handling those little *contretemps* which inevitably arise from time to time in the daily life of a gentleman's personal gentleman. I am reminded, just by way of an instance, of the Episode of the School for Young Ladies down Brighton way. Now, there was a case. The very moment I observed the small child waving to us in the road, I said to myself—— But perhaps it will be more satisfactory to relate the affair from the beginning. And I think it may be said to have commenced one evening at the moment when I brought the guv'nor his whisky and siphon and he burst out at me with such remarkable petulance.

Kind of moody the guv'nor had been for some days. Not at all his usual bright self. I had put it down to reaction from a slight attack of influenza which he'd been having: and, of course, I took no notice, just performing my duties as usual, until this evening which I'm talking about, when I brought him his whisky and siphon as was customary and he burst out at me.

"Oh, dash it, Jeeves!" he said, sort of overwrought. "I wish at least you'd put it on another table for a change."

"Sir?" I said.

"Every night, hang it all," proceeded the guv'nor, "you come in at exactly the same old time with the same old tray and put it on the same dashed old table. I'm fed up, I tell you. It's the bally monotony of it that makes it all seem so frightfully bally."

I confess that his words filled me with a certain apprehension. I had heard gentlemen in whose employment I've been talk in very much the same way before, and it had almost invariably meant that they were contemplating matrimony. It disturbed me, therefore, I'm free to admit, when Mr. Wooster spoke in this fashion. I had no desire to sever a connection so pleasant in every respect as his and mine had been, and my experience is that when the wife comes in at the front door the valet of bachelor days goes out at the back.

"It's not your fault, of course," went on the guv'nor, calming down a trifle. "I'm not blaming you. But, by Jove, I mean, you must acknowledge, I mean to say—I've been thinking pretty deeply these last few days, Jeeves, and I've come to the conclusion mine is an empty life. I'm lonely, Jeeves."

"You have a great many friends, sir," I pointed out.

"What's the good of friends?"

"Emerson says a friend may well be reckoned the masterpiece of Nature, sir."

"Well, you can tell Emerson from me next time you see him that he's an ass."

"Very good, sir."

"What I want—Jeeves, have you seen that play called I-forget-its-dashed-name?"

"No, sir."

"It's on at the What-d'you-call-it. I went last night. The hero's a chap who's buzzing along, you know, quite merry and bright, and suddenly a kid turns up and says she's his daughter. Left over from act one, you know—absolutely the first he'd heard of it. Well, of course, there's a bit of a fuss and they say to him: 'What-ho?' and he says: 'Well, what about it?' and they say:

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'Well, *what* about it?' and he says: 'Oh, all right, then, if that's the way you feel!' and he takes the kid and goes off with her out into the world together, you know. Well, what I'm driving at, Jeeves, is that I envied that chappie. Most awfully jolly little girl, you know, clinging to him trustingly and what not. Something to look after, if you know what I mean. Jeeves, I wish I had a daughter. I wonder what the procedure is?"

"Marriage is, I believe, considered the preliminary step, sir."

"No, I mean about adopting a kid. You can adopt kids, you know, Jeeves. I've seen it in the papers, often. 'So-and-so, adopted daughter of Tiddleypush.' It can be done all right. But what I want to know is how you start about it."

"The process, I should imagine, would be highly complicated and laborious, sir. It would cut into your spare time."

This seemed to check him for a while. Then he brightened up.

"Well, I'll tell you what I could do, then. My sister will be back from India next week with her three little girls. I'll give up this flat and take a house and have them all to live with me. By Jove, Jeeves, I think that's rather a scheme, what? Prattle of childish voices, eh? Little feet pattering hither and thither, yes!"

I concealed my perturbation. The scheme the guv'nor was toying with meant the finish of our cosy bachelor establishment if it came off: and no doubt some men in my place would at this juncture have voiced their disapproval and probably got the sack for it, the guv'nor being in what you might call an edgey mood. I avoided this *tracasserie*.

"If you will pardon my saying so, sir," I suggested, tactfully, "I think you are not quite yourself after your influenza. If I might express the opinion, what you require is a few days by the sea. Brighton is very handy, sir."

"Are you suggesting that I'm talking through my hat?"

"By no means, sir. I merely advocate a short stay at Brighton as a physical recuperative."

The guv'nor thought it over.

"Well, I'm not sure you're not right. I *am* feeling more or less of an onion. You might shove a few things in a suit-case and drive me down in the car to-morrow."

"Very good, sir."

"And when we get back I'll be in the pink and ready to tackle this pattering feet wheeze."

"Exactly, sir."

Well, it was a respite, and I welcomed it. But I began to see that a crisis had arisen which would require adroit handling. Rarely had I observed the guv'nor more set on a thing. Indeed, I could recall no such exhibition of determination on his part since the time when he had insisted, against my obvious disapproval, on wearing purple socks. However, I had coped successfully with that outbreak, and I was by no means un-sanguine that I should eventually be able to bring the present affair to a happy issue. Employers are like horses. They want managing. Some of us have the knack of managing them, some haven't. I, I am happy to say, have no cause for complaint.

FOR myself, I found our stay at Brighton highly enjoyable, and should have been willing to extend it; but the guv'nor, still restless, had had enough by the end of a couple of days, and on the third afternoon he instructed me to pack up and bring the car round to the hotel. We started back along the London road at about five of a fine summer's day, and had travelled perhaps two miles when this incident of the waving young lady occurred, to which I have already alluded. I trod on the brake and brought the vehicle to a standstill.

"What," inquired the guv'nor, waking from a reverie, "is the big thought at the back of this, Jeeves?"

"I observed a young lady endeavouring to attract our attention with signals a little way down the road, sir," I explained. "She is now making her way towards us."

The guv'nor peered.

"I see her. I expect she wants a lift, Jeeves."

"That was the interpretation which I placed upon her actions, sir."

"A jolly-looking kid," said the guv'nor. "I wonder what she's doing, biffing about the high road."

"She has the air to me, sir, of one who has been playing hookey. From school, sir."

"Hallo-allo-allo!" said the guv'nor, as the child reached us. "Do you want a lift?"

"Oh, I say, can you?" said the child, with marked pleasure.

"Where do you want to go?"

"There's a turning to the left about a mile farther on. If you'll put me down there, I'll walk the rest of the way. I say, thanks awfully. I've got a nail in my shoe."

She climbed in at the back. A red-haired young person with a snub nose and an extremely large grin. Her age, I should imagine, would be about twelve. She let down one of the spare seats, and knelt on it to facilitate conversation

"I'm going to get into a frightful row," she began. "Miss Tomlinson will be perfectly furious."

"No, really?" said the guv'nor.

"*Per*-fectly furious, my dear! It's a

"Well, you *are* a sportsman!" observed the young person, with great enthusiasm.

observed. "Isn't there anything to be done? I say, Jeeves, don't you think something could be done?"

"It was not my place to make the suggestion, sir," I replied, "but, as you yourself have brought the matter up, I fancy the trouble is susceptible of adjustment. I think it would be a legitimate subterfuge were you to inform the young lady's schoolmistress that you are an old friend of the young lady's father. In this case you could inform Miss Tomlinson that you had been passing the school and had seen the young lady at the gate and taken her for a drive. Miss Tomlinson's chagrin would no doubt in these circumstances be sensibly diminished if not altogether dispersed."

"Well, you *are* a sportsman!" observed

half-holiday, you know, and I sneaked away to Brighton, because I wanted to go on the pier and put pennies in the slot-machines. I thought I could get back in time so that nobody would notice I'd gone, but I got this nail in my shoe, and now there'll be a fearful row. Oh, well," she said, with a philosophy which, I confess, I admired, "it can't be helped. What's your car? A Sunbeam, isn't it? We've got a Wolseley at home."

The guv'nor was visibly perturbed. As I have indicated, he was at this time in a highly malleable frame of mind, tender-hearted to a degree where the young of the female sex were concerned. Her sad case touched him deeply.

"Oh, I say, this is rather rotten," he

the young person, with great enthusiasm. And she proceeded to kiss me—in connection with which I have only to say that I was sorry she had just been devouring some sticky species of sweetmeat.

"Jeeves, you've hit it!" said the guv'nor. "A sound, even fruity, scheme. I say, I suppose I'd better know your name and all that, if I'm a friend of your father's."

"My name's Peggy Mainwaring, thanks awfully," said the young person. "And my father's Professor Mainwaring. He's written a lot of books. You'll be expected to know that."

"Author of the well-known series of philosophical treatises, sir," I said. "They have a great vogue, though, if the young lady

will pardon my saying so, many of the Professor's opinions strike me personally as somewhat empirical. Shall I drive on to the school, sir ? "

" Yes, carry on. I say, Jeeves, it's a rummy thing. Do you know, I've never been inside a girls' school in my life."

" Indeed, sir ? "

" Ought to be a dashed interesting experience, Jeeves, what ? "

" I fancy that you may find it so, sir," I said.

We drove on a matter of half a mile down a lane, and, directed by the young person, I turned in at the gates of a house of imposing dimensions, bringing the car to a halt at the front door. The guv'nor and the child went in, and presently a parlourmaid came out

" You're to take the car round to the stables, please, ' she said.

" Ah ! Then everything is satisfactory, eh ? Where has the guv'nor got to ? "

" Miss Peggy has taken him off to meet her friends. And cook says she hopes you'll step round to the kitchen later and have a cup of tea."

" Inform her that I shall be delighted. Before I take the car to the stables, would it be possible for me to have a word with Miss Tomlinson ? "

A moment later I was following her into the drawing-room.

Handsome but strong-minded—that was how I summed up Miss Tomlinson at first glance. In some ways she recalled to my mind the guv'nor's Aunt Agatha. She had the same penetrating gaze and that indefinable air of being reluctant to stand any nonsense.

" I fear I am possibly taking a liberty, madam," I began, " but I am hoping that you will allow me to say a word with respect to my employer. I fancy I am correct in supposing that Mr. Wooster did not tell you a great deal about himself ? "

" He told me nothing about himself, except that he was a friend of Professor Mainwaring."

" He did not inform you, then, that he was *the* Mr. Wooster ? "

" *The* Mr. Wooster ? "

" Bertram Wooster, madam."

I will say for the guv'nor that, mentally negligible though he no doubt is, he has a name that suggests almost infinite possibilities. He sounds like Someone—especially if you've just been told he's an intimate friend of Professor Mainwaring. You might not be able to say off-hand whether he was Bertram Wooster the novelist, or Bertram Wooster the founder of a new school of thought ; but you would have an uneasy feeling that you were exposing your ignorance if you did not give the impression of familiarity with the name. Miss Tomlinson, as I had rather foreseen, nodded brightly.

" Oh, *Bertram* Wooster ! " she said.

" He is an extremely retiring gentleman, madam, and would be the last to suggest it himself, but, knowing him as I do, I am sure that he would take it as a graceful compliment if you were to ask him to address the young ladies. He is an excellent extempore speaker."

" A very good idea ! " said Miss Tomlinson, decidedly. " I am very much obliged to you for suggesting it. I will certainly ask him to talk to the girls."

" And should he make a pretence—through modesty—of not wishing—— ? "

" I shall insist ! "

" Thank you, madam. I am obliged. You will not mention my share in the matter ? Mr. Wooster might think that I had exceeded my duties."

I drove round to the stables and halted the car in the yard. As I got out, I looked at it somewhat intently. It was a good car, and appeared to be in excellent condition, but somehow I seemed to feel that something was going to go wrong with it—something pretty serious—something that wouldn't be able to be put right again for at least a couple of hours.

One gets these presentiments.

IT may have been some half-hour later that the guv'nor came into the stable-yard as I was leaning against the car and smoking a quiet cigarette.

" No, don't chuck it away, Jeeves," he said, as I withdrew the cigarette from my mouth. " As a matter of fact, I've come to touch you for a smoke. Got one to spare ? "

" Only gaspers, I fear, sir."

" They'll do," responded the guv'nor, with no little eagerness. I observed that his manner was a trifle fatigued and his eye somewhat wild. " It's a rummy thing, Jeeves, I seem to have lost my cigarette-case. Can't find it anywhere."

" I am sorry to hear that, sir. It is not in the car."

" No ? Must have dropped it somewhere, then." He drew at his gasper with relish. " Jolly creatures, small girls, Jeeves," he remarked, after a pause.

" Extremely so, sir."

" Of course, I can imagine some fellows finding them a bit exhausting in—er——"

" *En masse*, sir ? "

" That's the word. A bit exhausting *en masse*."

" I must confess, sir, that that is how they used to strike me. In my younger days, at the outset of my career, sir, I was at one time page-boy in a school for young ladies."

" No, really ? I never knew that before.

I say, Jeeves—er—did the—er—dear little souls *giggle* much in your day ? "

" Practically without cessation, sir."

" Makes a fellow feel a bit of an ass, what ? I shouldn't wonder if they usedn't to stare at you from time to time, too, eh ? "

" At the school where I was employed, sir, the young ladies had a regular game which they used to play when a male visitor arrived. They would stare fixedly at him and giggle, and there was a small prize for the one who made him blush first."

" Oh, no, I say, Jeeves, not really ? "

" Yes, sir."

" I'd no idea small girls were such demons."

" More deadly than the male, sir."

The guv'nor passed a handkerchief over his brow.

" Well, we're going to have tea in a few minutes, Jeeves. I expect I shall feel better after tea."

" We will hope so, sir."

But I was by no means sanguine.

I HAD an agreeable tea in the kitchen. The buttered toast was good and the maids nice girls, though with little conversation. The parlourmaid, who joined us towards the end of the meal, after performing her duties in the school dining-room, reported that the guv'nor was sticking it pluckily, but seemed feverish. I went back to the stable-yard, and I was just giving the car another look-over when the small Mainwaring child appeared.

" Oh, I say," she said, " will you give this to Mr. Wooster when you see him ? " She held out the guv'nor's cigarette-case. " He must have dropped it somewhere. I say," she proceeded, " it's an awful lark. He's going to give a lecture to the school."

" Indeed, miss ? "

" We love it when there are lectures. We sit and stare at the poor dears, and try to make them dry up. There was a man last term who got hiccoughs. Oh, *do* you think Mr. Wooster will get hiccoughs ? "

" We can but hope for the best, miss."

" It would be such a lark, wouldn't it ? "

" Highly enjoyable, miss."

" Well, I must be getting back. I want to get a front seat."

And she scampered off. An engaging child. Full of spirits.

She had hardly gone when there was an agitated noise, and round the corner came the guv'nor. Perturbed. Deeply so.

" Jeeves ! "

" Sir ? "

" Start the car ! "

" Sir ? "

" I'm off ! "

" Sir ? "

The guv'nor danced a few steps.

" Don't stand there saying ' Sir ? ' I tell you I'm off. Bally off ! There's not a moment to waste. The situation's desperate. Dash it, Jeeves, do you know what's happened ? The Tomlinson female has just sprung it on me that I'm expected to make a speech to the girls ! Got to stand up there in front of the whole dashed collection and talk ! I can just see myself ! Get that car going, Jeeves, dash it all. A little speed, a little speed ! "

" Impossible, I fear, sir. The car is out of order."

The guv'nor gaped at me. Very glassily he gaped.

" Out of order ! "

" Yes, sir. Something is wrong. Trivial, perhaps, but possibly a matter of some little time to repair." The guv'nor being one of those easy-going young gentlemen who'll drive a car but never take the trouble to learn anything about its mechanism, I felt justified in becoming technical. " I think it is the differential gear, sir. Either that or the exhaust."

I'm fond of the guv'nor, and I admit I came very near to melting as I looked at his face. He was staring at me in a sort of dumb despair that would have touched anybody.

" Then I'm sunk ! Or "—a slight gleam of hope flickered across his drawn features—" do you think I could sneak out and leg it across country, Jeeves ? "

" Too late, I fear, sir." I indicated with a slight gesture the approaching figure of Miss Tomlinson, who was advancing with a serene determination in his immediate rear.

" Ah, there you are, Mr. Wooster."

The guv'nor smiled a sickly smile.

" Yes—er—here I am ! "

" We are all waiting for you in the large schoolroom."

" But, I say, look here," said the guv'nor, " I—I don't know a bit what to talk about."

" Why, anything, Mr. Wooster. Anything that comes into your head. Be bright," said Miss Tomlinson. " Bright and amusing."

" Oh, bright and amusing ? "

" Possibly tell them a few entertaining stories. But, at the same time, do not neglect the graver note. Remember that my girls are on the threshold of life, and will be eager to hear something brave and helpful and stimulating—something which they can remember in after years. But, of course, you know the sort of thing, Mr. Wooster. Come. The young people are waiting."

I HAVE spoken earlier of resource and the part it plays in the life of a gentleman's personal gentleman. It is a quality peculiarly necessary if one is to share in scenes not primarily designed

for one's co-operation. So much that is interesting in life goes on apart behind closed doors that your gentleman's gentleman, if he is not to remain hopelessly behind the march of events, should exercise his wits in order to enable himself to be—if not a spectator—at least an auditor when there is anything of interest toward. I deprecate as both vulgar and *infra dig.* the practice of listening at keyholes, but without lowering myself to that, I have generally contrived to find a way.

In the present case it was simple. The large schoolroom was situated on the ground floor, with commodious French windows, which, as the weather was clement, remained open throughout the proceedings. By stationing myself behind a pillar on the porch or veranda which adjoined the room, I was enabled to see and hear all. It was an experience which I should be sorry to have missed. The guv'nor indubitably excelled himself.

Mr. Wooster is a young gentleman with practically every desirable quality except one. I do not mean brains, for in an employer brains are not desirable. The quality to which I allude is hard to define, but perhaps I might call it the gift of dealing with the Unusual Situation. In the presence of the Unusual, Mr. Wooster is too prone to smile weakly and allow his eyes to protrude. He lacks Presence. I have often wished that I had the power to bestow upon him some of the *savoir-faire* of a former employer of mine, Mr. Montague-Todd, the well-known financier, now in the second year of his sentence. I have known men call upon Mr. Todd with the express intention of horsewhipping him and go away half an hour later laughing heartily and smoking one of his cigars. To Mr. Todd it would have been child's play to speak a few impromptu words to a schoolroom full of young ladies; in fact, before he had

"We are all waiting for you in the large schoolroom."
"But I don't know a bit what to talk about."
"Why, anything, Mr. Wooster. Be bright—bright and amusing."

finished, he would probably have induced them to invest all their pocket-money in one of his numerous companies; but to the guv'nor it was plainly an ordeal which had knocked all the stuffing out of him right from the start. He gave one look at the young ladies, who were all staring at him in an extremely unwinking manner, blinked, and started to pick feebly at his coat-sleeve. His aspect reminded me of that of a bashful young man who has been persuaded against his better judgment to go on the platform and assist a conjurer and is having rabbits and hard-boiled eggs taken out of the top of his head.

The proceeding opened with a short but graceful speech of introduction from Miss Tomlinson.

"Girls, some of you have already met Mr. Wooster—Mr. *Bertram* Wooster, and you all, I hope, know him by reputation." Here the guv'nor gave a hideous, gurgling laugh and, catching Miss Tomlinson's eye, turned vermilion. Miss Tomlinson resumed. "He has very kindly consented to say a few words to you before he leaves, and I am sure that you will all give him your very earnest attention. Now, please."

SHE gave a spacious gesture with her right hand as she said the last two words, and the guv'nor, under the impression that they were addressed to him, cleared his throat and began to say something. But it appeared that her remark was directed to the young ladies, and was in the nature of a cue or signal, for she had no sooner spoken them than the whole school rose to its feet in a body and burst into a species of chant, of which I am glad to say I can remember the words, though the tune eludes me. The lyric ran as follows:—

Many greetings to you!
Many greetings to you!
Many greetings, dear stranger,
Many greetings,
Many greetings,
Many greetings to you!
Many greetings to you!
To you!

Considerable latitude of choice was given to the singers in the matter of key, and there was little of what I might call team-work. Each child went on till she had reached the end, then stopped and waited for the stragglers to come up. It was an unusual performance, and I, personally, found it extremely exhilarating. It seemed to smite the guv'nor, however, like a blow. He recoiled a couple of steps and flung up an arm defensively. Then the uproar died away, and an air of expectancy fell upon the room. Miss Tomlinson directed a brightly authoritative gaze upon the guv'nor, and he caught it, gulped somewhat, and tottered forward.

"Well, you know——" said the guv'nor.

Then it seemed to strike him that this opening lacked the proper formal dignity.

"Ladies——"

A silvery peal of laughter from the front row stopped him again.

"Girls!" said Miss Tomlinson. She spoke in a low, soft voice, but the effect was immediate. Perfect stillness instantly descended upon all present. I am bound to say that, brief as my acquaintance with Miss Tomlinson had been, I could recall few women I had admired more. She had grip.

I fancy that Miss Tomlinson had gauged the guv'nor's oratorical capabilities pretty correctly by this time, and had come to the conclusion that nothing much in the way of a stirring address was to be expected from him.

"Perhaps," she said, "as it is getting late, and he has not very much time to spare, Mr. Wooster will just give you some little word of advice which may be helpful to you in after-life, and then we will sing the school song and disperse to our evening lessons."

She looked at the guv'nor. The guv'nor passed a finger round the inside of his collar.

"Advice? After-life? What? Well, I don't know——"

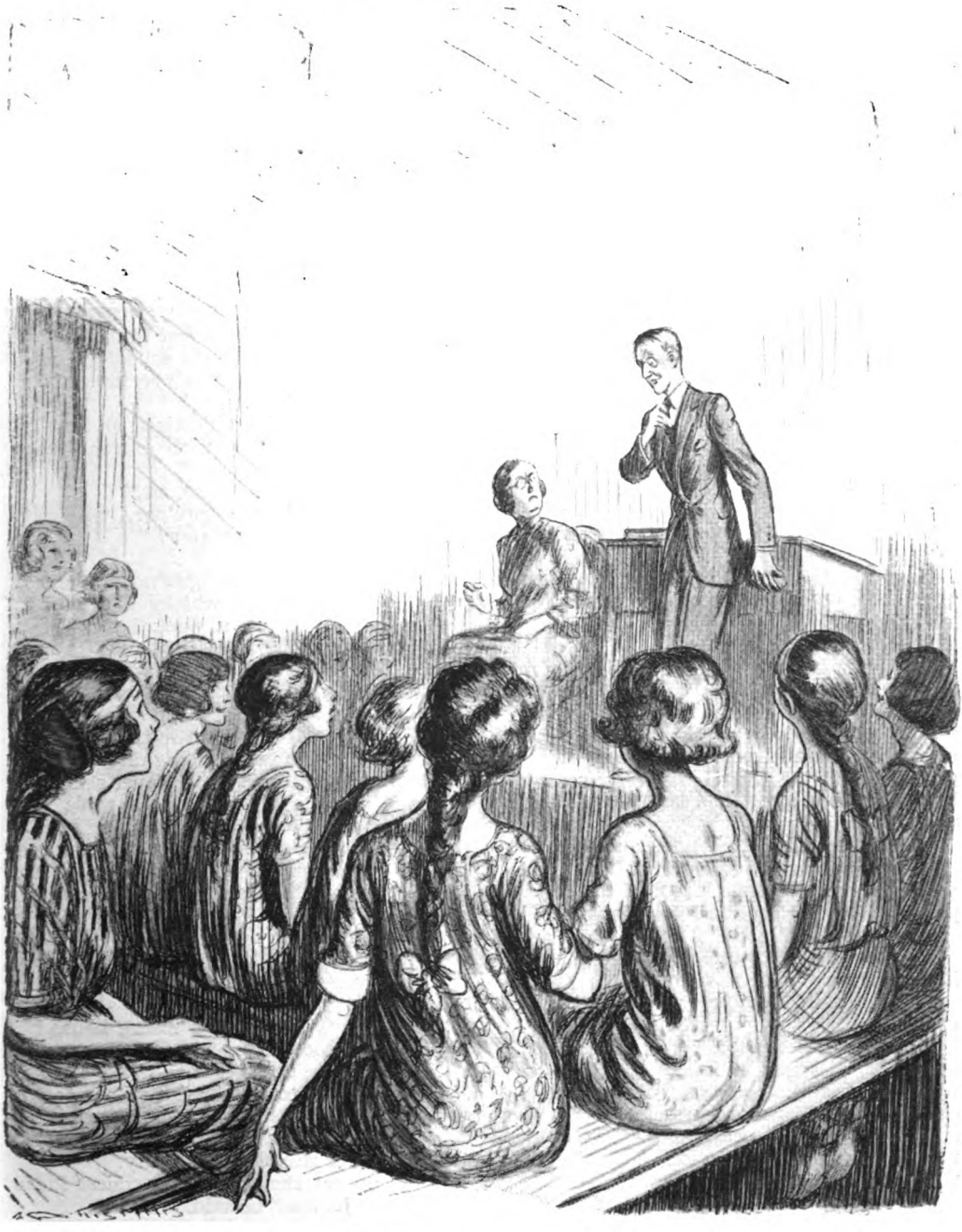
"Just some brief word of counsel, Mr. Wooster," said Miss Tomlinson, firmly.

"Oh, well—— Well, yes—— Well——" It was painful to see the guv'nor's brain endeavouring to work. "Well, I'll tell you something that's often done *me* a bit of good, and it's a thing not many people know. My old Uncle Henry gave me the tip when I first came to London. 'Never forget, my boy,' he said, 'that, if you stand outside Romano's in the Strand, you can see the clock on the wall of the Law Courts down in Fleet Street. Most people who don't know don't believe it's possible, because there are a couple of churches in the middle of the road, and you would think they would be in the way. But you can, and it's worth knowing. You can win a lot of money betting on it with fellows who haven't found it out.' And, by Jove, he was perfectly right, and it's a thing to remember. Many a quid have I——"

Miss Tomlinson gave a hard, dry cough, and the guv'nor stopped in the middle of a sentence.

"Perhaps it will be better, Mr. Wooster," she said, in a cold, even voice, "if you were to tell my girls some little story. What you say is, no doubt, extremely interesting, but perhaps a little——"

"Oh, ah, yes," said the guv'nor. "Story?



"Perhaps it will be better, Mr. Wooster," she said, in a cold, even voice, "if you were to tell my girls some little story. What you say is, no doubt, extremely interesting, but perhaps a little——"

Story?" He appeared completely distraught, poor young gentleman. "I wonder if you've heard the one about the stock-broker and the chorus-girl?"

"We will now sing the school song," said Miss Tomlinson, rising like an iceberg.

I decided not to remain for the singing of the school song. It seemed probable to me that the guv'nor would shortly be requiring the car, so I made my way back to the stable-yard, to be in readiness.

I had not long to wait. In a very few moments the guv'nor came tottering up. The guv'nor's is not one of those inscrutable faces which it is impossible to read. On the contrary, it is a limpid pool in which is mirrored each passing emotion. I could read it now like a book, and his first words were very much on the lines I had anticipated.

"Jeeves," he said, hoarsely, "is that damned car mended yet?"

"Just this moment, sir. I have been working on it assiduously."

"Then, for heaven's sake, let's go!"

"But I understood that you were to address the young ladies, sir."

"Oh, I've done that!" responded the guv'nor, blinking twice with extraordinary rapidity. "Yes, I've done that."

"It was a success, I hope, sir?"

"Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Most extraordinarily successful. Went like a breeze. But—er—I think I may as well be going. No use outstaying one's welcome, what?"

"Assuredly not, sir."

I had climbed into my seat and was about to start the engine, when voices made themselves heard; and at the first sound of them the guv'nor sprang with almost incredible nimbleness into the tonneau, and when I glanced round he was on the floor covering himself with a rug. The last I saw of him was a pleading eye.

"Have you seen Mr. Wooster, my man?"

Miss Tomlinson had entered the stable-yard, accompanied by a lady of, I should say, judging from her accent, French origin.

"No, madam."

The French lady uttered some exclamation in her native tongue.

"Is anything wrong, madam?" I inquired.

Miss Tomlinson in normal mood was, I should be disposed to imagine, a lady who would not readily confide her troubles to the ear of a gentleman's gentleman, however sympathetic his aspect. That she did so now was sufficient indication of the depth to which she was stirred.

"Yes, there is! Mademoiselle has just found several of the girls smoking cigarettes in the shrubbery. When questioned, they stated that Mr. Wooster had given them the horrid things." She turned. "He must be in the garden somewhere, or in the house. I think the man is out of his senses. Come, mademoiselle!"

It must have been about a minute later that the guv'nor poked his head out of the rug like a tortoise.

"Jeeves!"

"Sir?"

"Get a move on! Start her up! Get going and *keep* going!" I trod on the self-starter.

"It would perhaps be safest to drive carefully until we are out of the school-grounds, sir," I said. "I might run over one of the young ladies, sir."

"Well, what's the objection to that?" demanded the guv'nor, with extraordinary bitterness.

"Or even Miss Tomlinson, sir."

"Don't!" said the guv'nor, wistfully. "You make my mouth water!"

"JEEVES," said the guv'nor, when I brought him his whisky and siphon one night about a week later, "this is dashed jolly."

"Sir?"

"Jolly. Cosy and pleasant, you know. I mean, looking at the clock and wondering if you're going to be late with the good old drinks, and then you coming in with the tray always exactly on time, never a minute late, and shoving it down on the table and biffing off, and the next night coming in and shoving it down and biffing off, and the next night—— I mean, gives you a sort of safe, restful feeling. Soothing! That's the word. Soothing!"

"Yes, sir. Oh, by the way, sir——"

"Well?"

"Have you succeeded in finding a suitable house yet, sir?"

"House? What do you mean, house?"

"I understood, sir, that it was your intention to give up the flat and take a house of sufficient size to enable you to have your sister, Mrs. Scholfield, and her three young ladies to live with you."

The guv'nor shuddered strongly.

"You do get the damnedest silliest ideas sometimes, Jeeves," he said.

Next Month: "The Metropolitan Touch."

The FIFTH BANDIT

by

HAROLD STEEVENS

ILLUSTRATED BY W. SMITHSON BROADHEAD

THE Cannes season was obviously flagging. Carnival and its hectic accompaniments were long-forgotten delights — or nightmares. The golf competitions were done with, and the valuable prizes had duly passed into the grateful hands of ladies and gentlemen equipped with moderate skill and astonishing handicaps. The last of the tennis tournaments had run its belated course in the delectable grounds of an almost inaccessible hotel. The polo ponies were already trekking back to England by way of the P.L.M. *Concours hippique* and Dog Show were picturesque memories of yesterday. Only the yacht races still pursued their resolute way, though an entire absence of wind had already exhausted public interest.

Sports and gaieties were, in effect, defunct, and all that remained for us to do was to enjoy, calmly and rationally, the ever-expanding glories of the southern spring.

In these distressing circumstances we were truly grateful when we heard one morning that a daring robbery had been committed at one of the smartest houses in the neighbourhood, the well-known Villa des Gerbes. The thieves must have learned that a dinner-party was in contemplation for that night, and they had laid their plans accordingly.

Whether by design or accident the attack occurred at the moment when the guests, lulled to a comfortable security of body and mind by the procession of the solider courses, were engaged in eating asparagus. A lady of international reputation (so I was told) had just surprised her neighbour by taking an asparagus stalk from between her rosy lips and smiting him on the cheek with it—manners were free in those days—when a high-pitched voice called out in French from the garden end of the room :—

" Keep perfectly still, ladies and gentlemen. If anybody moves without orders I shall shoot."

The rattle of conversation instantly ceased, the asparagus stalk remained poised in air, and every head turned in the direction of the open French window. Young Lord Hospers swore and pushed back his chair, but as he scrambled to his feet he caught sight of a masked figure in evening dress standing pistol in hand in the doorway behind him. He dropped back in his chair again muttering, " Well, I'm hanged."

Three more masked figures now advanced into the room and took station round the dinner-table. Then the leader spoke again :—

" The gentlemen will get up and stand with their faces to the wall."

" Oh, 'ell," cried M. de Bonviveur, the dashing polo player, " I vill not stan' by an'——" But four barrels were immediately turned upon him, and, shrugging his shoulders, he joined his fellows along the wall.

The ladies were ordered to take off all their jewellery and place it on the table. The chief brigand then walked round and swept off the little piles one after another into a bag. What with tiaras, necklaces, bracelets, and rings, it was a very pretty haul indeed.

He then returned to his original post near the window and announced that anyone who attempted to follow would be shot. Thereupon his men withdrew and he followed them out into the garden. From beginning to end the business occupied only a few moments.

No sooner were the robbers fairly gone than Lord Hospers, catching up an empty champagne magnum and calling to De Bonviveur to " Come on ! " dashed after them, leaving the two older men to look after the ladies, who were now mostly in tears or hysterics.

Englishman and Frenchman ran hastily down the veranda steps into the garden. But here misfortune befell them. Young Lord Hospers, highly excited and unable to adjust his eyes to the darkness, tripped on the

last step and pitched head first into a bush of pilosporum—and M. de Bonviveur fell on top of him.

Their language was remarkable, and it seems likely that even the retreating bandits were startled by the gush of bi-lingual expletives, the more so because they were unaware of the cause of it.

From recrimination the two friends passed to blows. Before they got down to the garden gate the Englishman, smarting under the humiliation of the whole affair, lost his temper and delivered an open-handed buffet on the rotund cheek of De Bonviveur.

The Frenchman, in hot anger, sprang back a pace or two and then, crouching like Georges Carpentier, crept forward to the attack. In the darkness he misjudged his distance and his furious swing hit nothing but air, whereupon he over-balanced himself and fell sprawling in the middle of the path.

At once, to Hospers's utter astonishment, the Frenchman uttered a joyful cry, bounded to his feet, and flinging his arms round the young nobleman's neck, kissed him soundly on both cheeks; next, he seized his hands and began dancing round and round like a Niçois gamin at carnival time.

Hospers naturally thought De Bonviveur had gone suddenly mad; but he had not. For when he fell his hand had lighted on an object which, from the feel of it and from the slight tinkle of metal which came from it, his quick wit told him must surely be the bag of stolen jewels.

Examination proved that he was right. Flustered perhaps by the sounds of pursuit, and anxious above all things to save their skins, the gang had obviously bungled things somehow, and the result, from their point of view, was this sorry climax to a particularly well-executed *coup*.

For Lord Hospers and M. de Bonviveur, on the other hand, it was a scintillating triumph; they were the heroes of the night. The mortification of the ladies vanished like morning dew when they saw their jewels restored to them, and the *amour propre* of the men was comfortably re-established.

Next day the whole region was buzzing with the affair. During the course of the day I spoke with several of those who were present at the dinner-party, and the account which I have given is a condensation of what they told me. A fatuously distorted version got into the newspapers, of course, but as nothing had been actually lost the local police were not called in. Discretion is always best in such cases; inquiries are apt to prove inconvenient.

I need only add that it transpired that about the time of the robbery a motor-car, presumed to contain the bandits, was seen travelling at high speed in the direction of Grasse and the mountains.

A poor but, I hope, fairly honest governess, like myself, had no claim to share in the

delicious thrill of apprehension which several ladies who possessed valuable jewels—and some who did not—now professed. The idea prevailed that so capable a gang would not rest content with their failure, but would endeavour to retrieve it, either in Cannes or in some other neighbouring resort.

However, nothing happened, and before very long the subject was reluctantly labelled "stale" and excluded from conversational currency.

THE last of the Belle Place *bals masqués* was now due, and I went down into the town one morning to get a black velvet mask. First of all I went into a little shop in the Rue Grande (which is so narrow that it must have been named by "the rule of contrary"), but the wizened old Cannois *patron* said he had not such a thing in the place.

"If madame will return about next Christmas——" he added, facetiously.

"Why haven't you got any?" I asked him, rather crossly.

"It was a young gentleman, a man very gay," he answered, "who some days ago bought all I had left."

"Without doubt he was the bandit chief," I said. sarcastically.

"But no—he was a sufficiently rich young man; an Englishman obviously, and with a sufficiently curious voice." He spoke the last few words in a mimicking sing-song tone which suggested a young horse neighing. Then he began to chuckle, but suddenly, as if he felt that he had already said too much, his face became serious and prim.

"*Au revoir*, madame," he said, with a bow.

I had to go on to the Rue d'Antibes and pay a higher price, which did not please me, and I thought of that sufficiently rich young man with acute dislike.

The ball was crowded: there was no other function that night except Prince Rupert of X.'s bridge-party, which did not concern us lesser mortals. Everybody seemed to realize that it was the last fling of the season, and behaved accordingly—very much accordingly in some cases, I fear. The crowning thrill came towards midnight, when the stout Swiss concierge, who had never been known to "lose his wool" before, came pounding into the lounge, which is really a spacious hall, with every symptom of alarm.

"*Messieurs, dames!*" he cried, in stentorian tones, "*les cinq bandits de Cannes sont ici! Sauvez-vous!*"

The babel of chatter and laughter stopped at once; the strains of the indefatigable band in the gallery wavered and died away; the dancers ceased to weave their kaleidoscopic web of lovely form and colour, and several of the ladies gratefully sought the protecting embrace of their partners. In

The curtain was pushed aside and through the gap came five masked men with pistols in their hands. They quickly ranged themselves in line and raised their weapons.

a word, the scene which a moment before had been palpitating with gaiety and life was suddenly smitten with the wand of immobility.

I am not a nervous person, but my hands tightened involuntarily on my partner's arm when the cane-and-bead curtain which divided the lounge from the entrance hall was pushed aside and through the gap came briskly one after the other five masked men in immaculate evening dress with pistols in their hands. We watched fascinated while

they quickly ranged themselves in line and raised their weapons.

I saw my partner's face harden (it was Hubert Ingleby, if you want to know, and he was a matador, while I was a pierrette), and his eyes began to blaze as he disengaged my hand and pushed me behind him. I saw him gather himself together for a dash at the brigands—quite the matador touch! —and I had actually put out my hand to stop him, when the five pistols came sharply down to the " present," every barrel flew off, and out of every butt poured a shower of sugar comfits.

The strained silence was incontinently broken by a burst of jangling laughter—savage, hysterical, mirthful, according to the humour or the nerves of the laugher. The impudent young rascals bowed their acknowledgments. Two or three of the revellers went up and began to rate them for playing such a prank, but the spirit of fun was strong upon us and laughter won hands down. The pseudo-bandits speedily mingled with the dancers, the band struck up, and all was gay once more.

I made a point of dancing with the chief.

" A pretty fright you gave us, Mr. Bandit," I began.

" Not you! " he answered, shortly—a pose of silence was apparently a part of the game. As we whirled past his companions I noticed that the other girls were no more successful in encouraging confidences than I was myself.

All the same there was one thing which I was determined to find out, and I had no compunction in putting the question point blank to my uncommunicative robber.

" Were you the man who bought up all the black masks at Filou's ? "

" Who told you that ? " The counter question came sharp enough this time.

" Filou," I said.

" The dirty rascal, after taking my——" he checked himself, but I knew what he meant, and I went on, maliciously :—

" But he didn't say it was you that tipped him to keep quiet. You've just told me that yourself."

He saw that he had given himself away, and burst out into the very same neighing snigger that old Filou had mimicked. I laughed at him.

" But isn't it a good take off ? " he asked, to cover his slip.

" First rate. You managed it very well. It's a risky game to play, though, after that business at the Villa des Gerbes last week."

Again he laughed his silly laugh, but he said no more.

I SAT out the next two dances with Hubert Ingleby. He was still rumbling with indignation, like an uneasy sea after a storm, and I knew that a quiet talk with me would calm him more than anything else. But I was intrigued myself, too, and so soon as he left off railing and his eyes began to wander contentedly over my face and dress, I switched back to the subject on my own account.

" Do you think there is anything in it, Mr. Ingleby ? I mean, more than meets the eye ? "

" How so ? "—quizzing me with half-closed eyes.

" Well, you know that women have queer intuitions, and I have a feeling that there's something more than the jest of a single night in this bandit turn."

" Go on, Miss Capel, and tell me what's in your mind," he said, peering at me with his characteristic expression of alert sympathy.

I told him about my visit to the Rue Grande and my talk with the old Cannois shopkeeper, and I also described exactly my conversation with the " bandit chief " a few minutes ago.

" Why should he tip the old fellow to keep his mouth shut if he only wanted to do a stunt at this ball ? And it's a queer coincidence, isn't it, that he should have had this plan in his head *before* the hold-up at the Villa des Gerbes, and nearly a fortnight before the ball ? "

" Why, yes, of course it is "—Hubert's eyes began to kindle ; " and now that you remind me of it, I always thought there was something fishy about that hold-up. Everything is possible, but I never could see a pukka gang of bandits leaving the plunder behind like that."

" I believe it's the same gang," I said, plunging as women love to do and watching his face to see how he took it, " and the affair at the Gerbes was a hoax just like to-night's ! "

" By Jove," cried Hubert, and I heard the cane chair rend as he sat up straight and tense, " I shouldn't wonder if you're right. We'll soon settle it. Where are the blighters?"

He looked keenly round the hall, scanning the dancers. But the black opera hats and well-cut swallow-tails were nowhere to be seen.

" They've made themselves scarce ; I'm not surprised. Come on, and let's see what's become of them."

We dodged our way through the dancers and made for the entrance-hall. The portly concierge, that omniscient mortal, had resumed his post and his imperturbability ; he stood behind his desk gazing through the open glass doorway into the garden

with a contented smile on his bearded face.

"Accomplice of bandits, where are they?" Hubert accosted him.

"They are just gone off with the swag," replied he, chuckling over his witticism and his English slang.

"*Scélérat!*" cried Hubert. Then he whispered to me: "Put on your cloak as quickly as you can and come down to the garden. We'll run 'em to earth."

I went off humming a tune, but as soon as I got upstairs to the deserted corridor I flew along to my room, jerked off my pierrette cap, kicked off my satin shoes and slipped on an old pair of tennis shoes, snatched up a scarf and a black satin cloak, and in a very few moments reached the garden by way of the *escalier de service*.

Hubert was waiting. Like me, he had changed into tennis shoes, and instead of his three-cornered hat he wore a cloth cap above his mask; but from neck to ankles he was still the matador. We went down over the tennis courts, to avoid the lighted path, and slipped out of the gate into the road.

"There they go!" said Hubert, looking up the hill towards La Bocca railway bridge, where a red tail-light was just topping the brow. "My two-seater is just here in the annexe. Will you come?"

"Rather!" I said.

IN a very little time we had breasted the hill and were running down the farther slope. The road was quite deserted and Hubert's car was in splendid order, as usual; we simply flew along.

After the heat of the crowded ballroom, the cool night air was perfectly delicious. When I had enjoyed a few moments of this ecstasy I began to ask myself what we were about; what was Hubert's plan of action, if any?

But he was humped over his wheel with his eyes glued on the road ahead, driving for all he was worth, and I did not interrupt him.

As we debouched on to the plain we shaved past the *garde champêtre* leisurely cycling his rounds and nearly blew him into the ditch—we had no lights and never noticed him until we were close beside him. He yelled, and I just saw him double over his handle-bars and begin pedalling like a track-racer. Then we shot away from him. Before us, far down the road, glimmered the red tail-light of the bandits' car.

Suddenly it disappeared. "Damn!" said Hubert (he must have forgotten my presence!), but he never slackened speed and drove recklessly forward through the dark tunnel of the overhanging trees.

From force of habit my eyes wandered over the dim plain in search of the picturesque old pines of Ranguin, always great favourites of mine. The pines were indistinguishable, but what I did see away on our right was a little speck of red, the only bit of light on all the plain.

"There they go!" I cried, pointing across Hubert's face.

He glanced aside for the fraction of a second, then pulled out his clutch, jammed on his brake, and brought the car round in a frightful sweep. I really thought we were done for; it was lucky the road was dry.

A narrow culvert, not much wider than the car itself, bridged the ditch and led into a lane down which the bandits must have turned. As we came round, our near hind-wheel actually left the road and dipped over the ditch, then bumped against the edge of the culvert and jumped on to the road again. The car rocked and staggered, but the luck was still with us; Hubert kept control, and in a moment or two we were buzzing along the lane, all out.

Neither of us had the least idea where it led to, though, judging by the red light which was now travelling away in front of us, it seemed to loop back in the direction of the town. After the smooth *route nationale* the going was rough, and presently I felt that something was wrong. Hubert grunted—another swear-word, I fear, by the sound of it—and brought the car to a standstill.

"Tyre's gone flat!" he snapped, and was out in the road in a jiffy, unstrapping his spare wheel.

I jumped out to help. It was not very easy in the darkness even with the aid of the big French sulphur-matches (the best in the world for outdoor use) which I struck and held up one after the other while Hubert worked.

"Must have been that confounded ditch," he said; then presently, "I'm sure I don't know what I'm hurrying for. We've lost them now, that's certain."

"Never mind," said I, "we've had a jolly run."

"Rotten ass I am to drag you out on a wild goose chase like this!"

"I wouldn't have missed it for anything!"

"Well, that's that," said Hubert, brushing his hands together to knock off the dust. "Now we'll tootle back. Come to think of it, I don't know what we could have done if we had caught them. Shall we follow along this old lane? It ought to take us the right way, by the look of it. We'll have a shot at it."

"Rather!" I said. "I hate turning back."

It was the curliest road that ever was; at one time it seemed to be leading us out

into the black wilderness, and I confess that I began to feel a wee bit anxious. Then we turned about the fiftieth corner, and there far away on the left were the tiny faint lights of Grasse on its platform under the mountains, and right in front of us the first scattered houses of Cannes.

"Good old Cannes!" cried Hubert, with a sideways scrutiny of me. I took it as his expression of solicitude and relief, but I was admitting no past qualms.

"Jolly old place!" was all my response.

Now we were trundling down the hill through the decorous region of the big villas, with a gentle land breeze at our backs. I was thinking of nothing in particular except that I felt as happy as a queen.

"This is Prince Rupert's," I said to Hubert when we were driving past a high bamboo thicket perched behind a long stone wall. "I wonder if his bridge-party——"

Then quite involuntarily I clutched Hubert's arm, for as we ran by the gate I had caught a glimpse of the red tail-light of a big car close in under the bamboos.

"Did you see it?" I gasped. "That car in the drive? I'm sure it's theirs."

Hubert pulled up sharply.

"By Jove!" he said as he jumped out, "I wouldn't be surprised. What a woman you are for intuitions! That's the car right enough," he whispered, after a brief inspection outside and in; "seats still warm and a terrible smell of 'gaspers.' Hal-lo! That settles it!"

"What have you found, Señor Sherlock Holmes?" I whispered back.

For answer he quietly closed the door, went back to the tail-light, and thrust into its dim red glow one of the toy pistols which the bandits had used with such grotesque effect at the Belle Place ball less than two hours ago.

"Come on, pierrette. You take the murderous weapon—and don't hesitate to use it! Come along up and see the fun."

He took my hand and we groped our way cautiously up the black drive.

I knew the ground pretty well because I had visited the villa several times with my small charges, who were playmates of the Princess's children. I was also on good terms with the Prince, who loved the English, and during his long dynastic exile had spent a considerable part of every year at his home in the English shires.

Our rubber-soled shoes made no noise at all on the well-rolled gravel and the night was as still as it could be. We crept along with ears astretch for the slightest sound. The night air and the excitement together made me shiver and I felt Hubert's strong hand tighten on mine. After a minute or two of this slow progress we saw the lights of the house through the bamboo stems and were able to get on faster. Not a soul was to be seen.

EMERGING at length from the drive we stopped to listen. For one moment we heard nothing at all except the faintest rustling of the bamboos behind us. Then the silence was sharply broken by the same high-pitched falsetto voice that I seemed to know so well. Every word came distinct and clear:—

"*Messieurs, mesdames, restez tout-à-fait tranquilles.*"

"Now for it, Sylvia," murmured Hubert at my ear, and his use of my Christian name, which I might have resented at another time, seemed curiously natural just then. Pulling me by the hand, he ran lightly across the garden towards the open French window of what I knew to be the card-room.

I shall never forget that picture: it was as good as the best stage scene I ever saw. Three tables were going—or, rather, had been going until a few moments ago. Now the dozen players were sitting back in their chairs as still as if bound by a spell.

Over each table hung a shaded electrolier, which threw a bright illumination upon the cards and upon the hands of the players, but left their faces in shadow. In convenient shadow, too, were the masked faces of the bandits and their levelled pistols. One of them was standing at the farther end of the room with his back against the door, three stood near the tables, and the leader commanded operations from a position three or four yards from the window where we stood. His back, of course, was turned towards us.

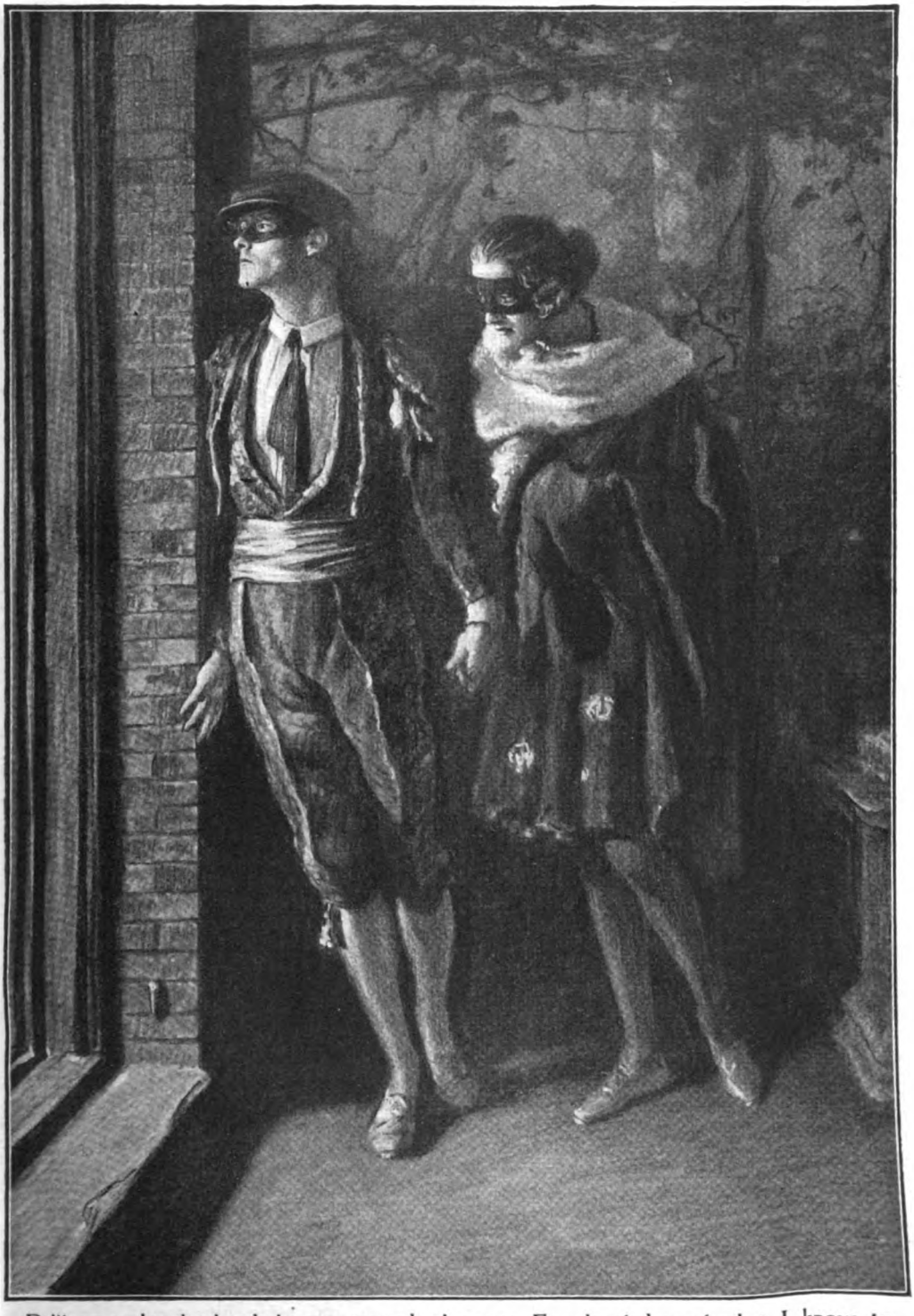
"The gentlemen will rise from their places——" he was saying in his silly, sing-song voice.

I disengaged my hand from Hubert's, slipped into the room, and glided quickly along the wall towards the tables.

I must have been a surprise to everybody, though not, I fear, an altogether welcome one. My white tennis shoes, black stockings, and the lower half of my black pierrette skirt with its big white rosettes were in bright light; the rest of me was dim—black satin cloak, pink fleecy wrap, and the mask which I had never thought to remove. My "pistol" I held hidden under my cloak.

That horsey-voiced ass stopped in the middle of his sentence (with his mouth open, I should think, though I did not stop to look), while the players, whose nerves had already received one nasty shock, stared at me as if I were a ghost.

I went straight up to the Prince and stood between him and the nearest bandit. In



Pulling me by the hand, he ran towards the open French window of what I knew to be the cardroom. I shall never forget that picture.

the half-light his face looked ghastly grey; it must have been as white as a sheet in reality, and he shrank back in his chair when I bent down to speak to him.

"I'm Sylvia, your Highness," I murmured as distinctly as I could; "Sylvia, the English governess. Please come nearer; I want to whisper in your ear," and sticking out my elbows so as to spread my cloak as wide as possible, I put one hand on his shoulder and whispered:—

"I believe it's all a hoax. I'm sure it is. Take this pistol—it's only a dummy—keep it out of the light. Stand up, and order them to put their hands up!"

While speaking I poked the butt of the pistol into his shirt front under the cover of my cloak. He fumbled for it with icy fingers, found it and gripped it.

"Quick, your Highness, quick!" I threw all the will which I possessed into the whispered words.

The leader of the bandits had now recovered from his surprise; perhaps he even smelt a rat. "Will that young woman——" he began, with his affected bandit courtesy.

"Now, your Highness, now!" I gripped the Prince's shoulder and gave it a shake.

His *amour propre* was touched at last. He sprang up as if an electric wire had shocked him, nearly bowling me over in his sudden excitement. He certainly knew how to make a scene of it once he began.

"Put up your hands, all of you!" he cried in his rich, dramatic voice, "or I shall fire." He brought up his pistol with a flourish, holding it above the electrolier where the shadow was deepest." One! . . Two! . . ." He was really doing the thing in style.

"Bravo! bravo!" cried two or three of the guests. "Eep eep ooray!" shrilled a little foreign lady.

It was altogether too much for the pseudo-bandits. Up went five pairs of hands towards the ceiling.

"Monsieur le Duc, have the kindness to collect the weapons. With your left hands remove your masks!"

Ruefully they proceeded to do as they were bid. There was a little pause while the guests bent eagerly forward to scrutinize the features of their discomfited tormentors. Then cries of indignation and derision broke out. Two or three people started up with the apparent intention of chastising the hoaxers on the spot.

Four of those shamefaced desperadoes I knew perfectly well by sight and name; they were young sparks of good family and notoriously ready for any fool jest that offered an outlet for their wild animal spirits. I shall not name them now because every one of them has since made full reparation for this and every other folly which he may have committed in the days before the Great Test came to prove the fibre of our youthful aristocracy.

The fifth bandit was a mystery. He was older than the rest and the cut of his jib, as the sailors say, was altogether different. Beside their open and, truth to tell, somewhat simple countenances his expression was concentrated and purposeful.

I had noticed that while obeying the Prince's orders he alone had moved, as it were by accident, a step or two closer to the table by which he had first stationed himself, until now he was within arm's length of the nearest player. She was a foreigner and a stranger to me, but even in the shaded light I could see that she was a woman of much beauty.

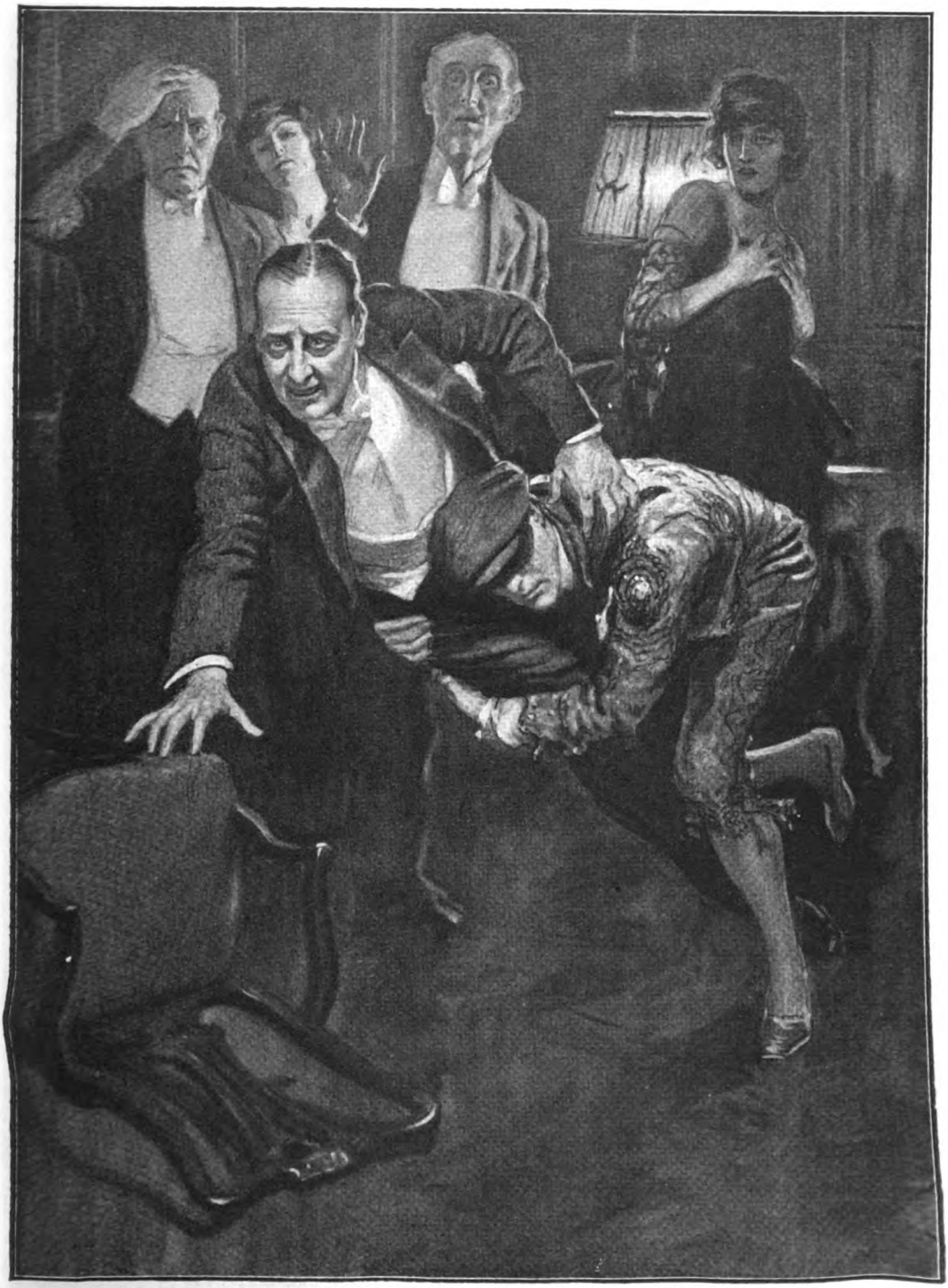
She was also richly dressed, and had I been an amateur bandit, the load of jewels which she carried upon her person would have tempted me to turn professional on the spot. In particular, she wore a magnificent rope of pearls, of great size and perfectly graded, which trailed their exquisite lustre over her white neck and bosom and came to rest in her lap.

THE old Duke, as requested by the Prince, had already collected four of the mock pistols, and was approaching this fifth bandit with a sarcastic jest upon his lips when the man, instead of giving up his weapon as the rest of the band had done, dropped it into his own pocket, turned his back on the Duke, and stepped behind the handsome lady with the glorious pearls.

Then, with the speed and dexterity of a prestidigitateur, he snapped the fastening of the necklace, flicked it up into his left hand under the nose of the astounded Duke, and bolted for the open French window.

But for Hubert he would certainly have reached it and probably have got safely away. Hubert, however, believing like myself that the whole thing was a stupid practical joke, had stayed near the window with the idea of blocking the exit of the jesters, should they try to escape before fitting punishment, or at least contumely, had fallen upon them. When the five pistols went up at the Prince's command, Hubert's soldierly eye had noticed that the fifth bandit's weapon was much more like the real article than the rest, and he had therefore watched the man particularly. Nevertheless, this lightning turn of events was so unexpected that only the Rugby footballer's instinct to collar a flying foe, I firmly believe, made Hubert act in time.

As the thief darted by, I saw Hubert leap in and seize him round the thighs. Down they went with a crash, "matador" and "swell mobsman" locked together.



As the thief darted by, I saw Hubert leap in and seize him round the thighs. Down they went with a crash.

But the robber was as lithe as an eel; as his hands touched the floor he jerked himself forward with such spasmodic energy that his legs slid through Hubert's arms, and he was free again. He bounded to his feet; there was absolutely nothing now between him and liberty.

Yet, just as his body swayed forward for the rush, Hubert's right arm shot out and gripped his ankle. Down he came again, and out of his pocket spilt the rope of pearls, and behold! a king's ransom went slithering along the parquet floor towards the window as though in mocking challenge to the thief to overtake and win away with it.

I saw the wild beast leap up in his contorted face. His hand flew to his pocket, and quick as thought his pistol was out and pointed at my Hubert's body.

I screamed and covered my eyes. Next moment there was an awful explosion, followed instantly by a crash of glass.

For me, that explosion shattered the world; I felt myself drifting out, and I was not loath to go, when there was nothing more to stay for. Then, as the mists of oblivion were closing over me, I heard Hubert's voice calling "Sylvia!" and I struggled fiercely back and opened my eyes. Dear boy! even in that moment of peril his thought had been for me; he heard me scream and saw me fainting, and he sang out to reassure me.

For by Heaven's mercy Hubert had not been hit. What had happened was that the pseudo-bandit chief had grasped the situation at last, run into the mêlée and reached the robber's pistol with his foot in the nick of time. The kick sent the pistol flying, and the bullet only smashed an electric lamp and its Venetian glass shade.

I opened my eyes in time to see the "bandit chief" drop down on to the real thief's chest and grab his throat.

Close behind came his three companions, and without hesitation they subsided on top of their victim like Westminster schoolboys on the historic pancake.

The fellow writhed and struggled—he had the strength and agility and ferocity of a tiger—and tossed them about like corks on a wave; but they stuck to him gamely, and Hubert's grip of his ankle hampered him. He gave in at last and lay still, savage and panting, with his four erstwhile confederates sitting on various parts of him. The handsome lady walked coolly over and collected her pearls.

When the men had had a breather, one of them went off to get straps from the motor-car, while Hubert took his place on the desperado's feet. They strapped his legs together and his arms to his sides, sat him up on a chair, and gave him a drink. Then the Prince plied him with questions, but he would not talk.

Somebody telephoned for the police, and while we were waiting the hoaxers made a clean breast of it. They told us that until a week ago this man had been a complete stranger to all of them. They had met him first in their favourite American bar, and he had at once claimed acquaintance with friends of theirs in England. He had made himself very agreeable, and was apparently the nicest fellow in the world, and a thorough good sport, with money to burn.

Somehow or other he had learned or guessed that they were responsible for the Gerbes affair, and when one of their party after a heavy night in his company had had to cry off from the Belle Place stunt, he had begged to be allowed to make atonement by joining in himself. And it was at his suggestion that they had wound up the night by coming on to the Prince's; as a matter of fact, he had dared them to do it and they had foolishly taken his "dare." But who or what he really was they hadn't a notion.

That interesting conundrum was solved immediately when the local Chief of Police arrived upon the scene.

"Ah, Lenoir!" he said, amiably, as soon as he set eyes on the man. "We heard that you were visiting our charming coast. I must congratulate you on the distinguished society in which you find yourself; but you never could restrain your passion for the aristocracy—and their possessions! Lenoir's reputation, M. le Prince, is international, though he does not court publicity! He is a well-known and always desired guest in the hotels which the Republic maintains for the intermittent accommodation of gentlemen who follow his adventurous calling. I have to thank you, M. le Prince, and the present company also for assisting us to recover so enterprising a client, whom we cannot endure to lose sight of for any considerable length of time!"

He signed to three *agents de police* who were waiting in the background. Lenoir went out in handcuffs.

I NEED only add that the courageous behaviour of Prince Rupert on this occasion was so highly pleasing to his people (to whom it was suitably reported by the gentlemen of the Press) that his return to the throne of his ancestors was materially hastened. The Prince insisted on considering himself under some obligation to Hubert and me, and warmly pressed us to visit him and the Princess at the picturesque old palace of Caresco. Indeed, it was in that enchanting environment that we spent our honeymoon.

TENNIS TIPS

BY THE LEADING PLAYERS

TAKE THESE TIPS AND IMPROVE YOUR GAME.

SMASHING.

By RANDOLPH LYCETT

(*Winner of many Championships*).

THE secret of correct and "safe" smashing is balance, allied, of course, to proper foot-work. Personally, I am poised on my left foot when I actually hit the ball, with the left or disengaged arm extended. This "fin," which I think is the best word to use in this connection, helps one's balance according to the direction one smashes and the manner in which the ball comes. In my own case, all the "direction" in the shot comes from the wrist and not the arm. The cut one imparts to the ball is a great aid to control. Generally speaking, the ball is not hit with the open face of the racket, but in something of the same fashion in which one serves. Thus there must be a certain amount of swing behind the head as preparation is made to hit the ball.

Randolph Lycett putting into practice his advice on "Smashing."

Photo. Sport and General.

Why do so many players "mess" their smashes? Mainly through mistiming, by taking their eye off the ball. You must concentrate on the stroke to the very limit of your powers. Get into position for the ball as it rises from your opponent's racket, so that you do not have to make it running backwards. No good player smashes in that fashion.

As regards practice, there is nothing to beat this. Get a ball boy or friend to toss balls high in the air over a net to you, so that they come from all angles and altitudes. Even now, I find this helps my own smashing considerably.

THE AMERICAN SERVICES.

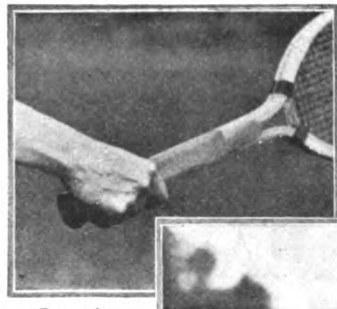
By C. S. GRACE

(*The leading English exponent of these strokes*).

I SERVE two kinds of American service, the "Ordinary" and the "Reverse." My "Ordinary American" service invariably breaks towards the receiver's left hand, whilst the "Reverse" breaks towards his right. To serve the "Ordinary American" service, I grip the racket as I would a hammer; that is, with the racket at right angles to the forearm, and the face in the same plane as the forearm.

I then take up a stance near the centre of the base-line with my left foot at an angle of about forty-five degrees to the line, and throw up the ball so that it falls

about six inches behind my head. Bending well back (which is an essential part of the service, and somewhat trying to the abdominal muscles at first), I endeavour to strike the ball an upward glancing blow with a nearly horizontal racket, the racket moving towards the right and finishing on that side of the body.



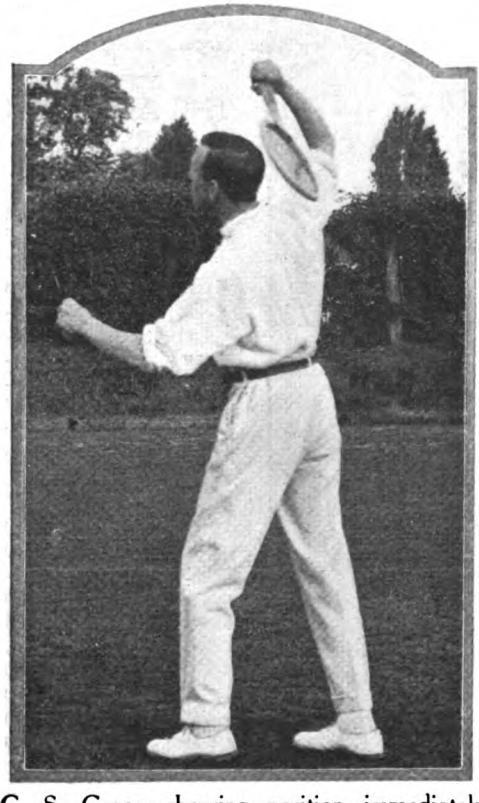
Grip for "Ordinary American" service.

The face of the racket "brushes" the back of the ball, and, passing upward and over the ball obliquely, gives it a spin which causes a certain amount of swerve of flight, and a high bound on striking the ground.

For the "Reverse American," I grip the racket so that it "faces," and is somewhat inclined towards the direction I want to serve the ball. My fingers are considerably separated and point up the racket handle. I then take up a stance with feet nearly at right angles to the line, so that I am facing in the direction I want to serve. I then throw up the ball slightly in front of me, and move the racket sharply upwards, and at the same time across the proposed direction of flight of the ball, from right to left, so as to strike the ball at the back a very oblique and upward blow, the racket finishing on the left of the body.

Grip for "Reverse American" service.

The result is a serve that swerves from left to right and breaks from right to left. As the blow is across the direction of flight, naturally the more vigour imparted to the blow, the more satisfactory is the result.



C. S. Grace showing position immediately before striking ball in "Ordinary American" service.

Position when striking ball in "Reverse American" service.

THE BACKHAND GROUND STROKE.

By F. GORDON LOWE

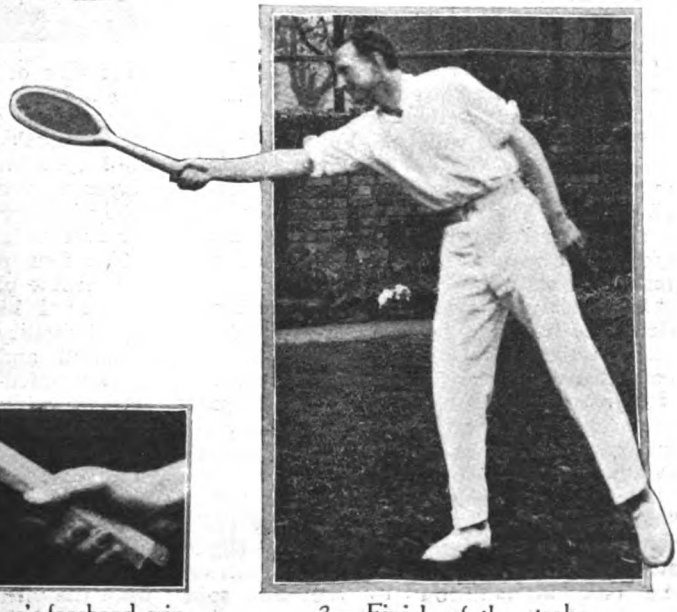
(*The Davis Cup International.*)

WHAT may be termed the "English" backhand is a very valuable legacy left us by the late R. F. Doherty and the one that I have always endeavoured to use. I do not say it is capable of producing better results than any of the other varieties, but it is as efficient, easier to acquire, and not so liable to break down if an "off" day occurs.

1.—F. G. Lowe's backhand stroke—the start.

2.—Where the impact takes place.

F. G. Lowe's forehand grip.



3.—Finish of the stroke.

Contrary to the general idea, a good backhand should come more naturally than the forehand, on account of the easier swing. A great deal can be assimilated by watching such exponents as A. E. Beamish, W. C. Crawley, and possibly myself play this stroke. When once you have grasped its principles, practice will make perfect. Now for the two golden rules which must be kept in mind when making this stroke.

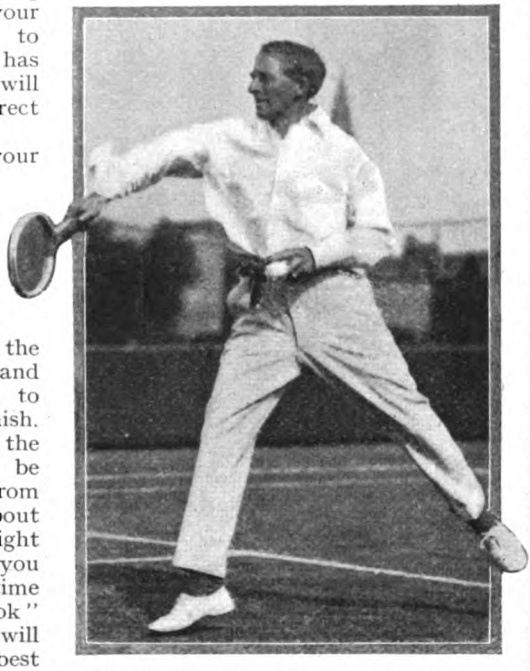
1. Keep the head of the racket above the waist. This may be exaggerated at first, the head being gradually dropped as proficiency is obtained.

2. Grip your racket comfortably and firmly so that the striking face is pointing slightly towards the ground.

Your thumb may be held diagonally across the back of the handle. By this means power will be added, but there will be a tendency to make the stroke stereotyped. The ball ought to be struck with an upward movement of the racket and arm. The wrist will turn the striking face of the racket over until it almost faces the ground on completion of the stroke, giving a final

flick to the ball. This upward movement will also impart a little top spin, which will cause the ball to dip quickly at the end of its flight. Never check your body or racket at the moment of impact, but let both swing through easily with your stroke—herein lies the secret of pace, the keynote of the modern game. The head of your racket should finish pointing to the spot in your opponent's court to where your return has been directed. This will give you the correct line.

As a general rule your body should be sideways to the net, with the left foot behind; before impact the weight should be on this leg, evenly balanced between the two at the moment of striking, and swung through on to the right at the finish. Glue your eye on the ball, which should be struck well away from your body and about in a line with the right leg. In a match you will seldom have time to get into the "book" position, and you will have to make the best of the position that occurs. The better your footwork, the better your poise will be. Your body will often be facing the net with the left foot in front—technically, this is incorrect. However, I frequently find myself in this position, and I believe my passing shots are more difficult to anticipate when made from this stance.



M. J. G. Ritchie's base-line drive.
Photo, Sport and General.

My most paying shot is a backhand one down the line, and it has rescued me from many a tight corner. Keep this stroke up your sleeve for a crisis, as if attempted too often, your opponent will learn to anticipate it. The backhand cross-court drive is easier, for there is generally more court to aim for.

In practice, be continually trying this "down the line" shot, as it is a difficult one to produce. Perhaps a slight drag, made by drawing the racket across the ball, in addition to the top spin mentioned above, is a help in executing the stroke. Knock up against a wall, if there is no other form of practice available.

BASE-LINE DRIVING.

By M. J. G. RITCHIE
(*Ex-Doubles Champion*).

IN much the same way as a "long loser" on the billiard table is one of the most useful strokes on the board, so are base-line strokes at lawn tennis a very considerable portion of the backbone of that game. To be a really good "base-liner" means that one can hold one's own against almost any style of play. No better example of the elevation to be attained by really fine base-line play can be mentioned than A. W. Gore, winner of the Championship no fewer than three times. On a perfect court a first-class base-liner should theoretically be able to beat a first-class volleyer. I know that, practically, it is often the other way round, but such a result may frequently be ascribed to adverse circumstances, particularly a bad surface, which naturally affects ground strokes more than volleying.

The three strokes principally made use of by the base-liner are the forehand and backhand drives and the lob, and it may safely be said that any player who can hit powerfully and accurately in these departments can hold his or her own with almost anybody.

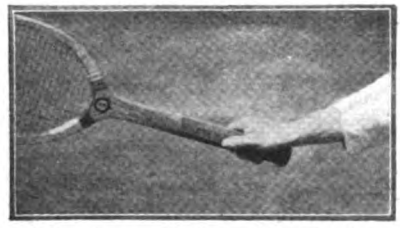
The four principal essentials to success in base-line play are keeping the eye on the ball, hard hitting, accuracy, and control. Equal facility in making strokes on both forehand and backhand wings is to be recommended—running round balls on the weakest wing (if any) in order to utilize the stronger one, is *not* recommended. Good drives can generally be brought off with more ease hitting obliquely from right to left from the forehand and left to right from the backhand, these being the natural directions of such strokes.

Besides this, if these strokes are made from the vicinity of either end of the base-line they will probably cross the net somewhere near the centre, where it is lowest, consequently more pace can be imparted with less danger of the ball going out.

Side-line drives are rather more difficult, because it must be remembered the net is higher at the sides and the stroke must consequently have more of a lift on it, with probably less pace. To get a really good base-line drive I find the best way is to face the ball in a sideways fashion, with left foot advanced for the forehand and the right foot for the backhand. In lobbing, one has to get the racket well underneath the ball, and it is obviously the desirable thing to hit it as high as possible to fall near the adversary's base-line.

A good base-liner generally makes his base of operations a few feet behind the centre of the base-line, from which point he is prepared to sprint wherever necessary.

Mrs. Larcombe's backhand drop-shot. She is just going forward and down (stooping a little) to meet the ball and "block" it. The racket does not move any farther on.



Mrs. Larcombe's backhand grip

Forehand drop-shot. She is just going to "stroke" the ball with a slight wrist movement, as this shot was made off a high bounce and so required more spin to be put on the ball.

THE DROP-SHOT.

By Mrs. E. W. LARCOMBE
(*Lady Champion of* 1912).

THE drop-shot is such a fascinating and valuable stroke that I should love to help anyone to play it. First of all, try to get the right *idea*. Don't think that a drop-shot is played by waiting for the ball and then "cutting" it as short and as heavily as you can. That will possibly be a short shot, but it will not be the true "drop."

The drop-shot is more like a half-volley. Its two main factors are quickness and control—quickness in getting on to the ball, and absolute control of the racket, with a sense of "touch" almost as with a musical instrument.

Personally, I hold my racket horizontally, its face at right angles to the

1.—S. N. Doust demonstrating the beginning of the backhand cross-court volley.

But even that must be quite a little movement, made just with the wrist—nothing at all in the nature of a "swing."

Personally, I find the drop-shot easier backhanded, so it may help others to try that way first.

ANGULAR VOLLEYING:

A Prescription.

By S. N. DOUST

(*The great Australian Volleyer*).

THE following is the best way, in my opinion, to learn the cross-court or angular volley: Take one lawn tennis court and erect a hard wooden fence at a maximum of five feet away from the side-lines. Then select an opponent who can only be beaten by steering the ball hard into that fence, and you will gain your points in two ways.

1. By the ball striking the fence, in which case it falls "dead."

2. By your opponent running into the fence, in which case he generally injures himself, and will avoid in future balls that look likely to lead him to hurt himself again.

That is how I learned my cross-court shot. My club's court in Australia was confined by a fence, and this was our objective all through a match. It was not a thought-out stroke, but the ground, the wrist firm, but not too tense. I meet the ball *on the rise*, not quite as near the ground as for a half-volley, but one and a half to two feet off the ground. I let the ball meet my racket and bounce back just over the net. The racket hardly moves in any direction. It is just held with sufficient firmness to get the right strength for the distance the ball has to travel.

2.—The position of racket at the moment of striking the ball.

If the ball is taken soon enough there is no need to put extra spin on. The fact that it has been taken on the rise will make it bounce a little backwards when it goes over the net again.

The really important thing to get into your head is the *stillness of the racket*. It just meets the ball and "blocks" it. If the ball is taken a little later, almost at the top of the bound, it is wiser to put a little extra spin on it. Do this by moving the racket a tiny bit downwards, still keeping its face at right angles—almost as if you were stroking the back of the ball.

3.—Finish of the stroke.

obvious one in the position in which our court was situated.

When this court was sold, the members had to go farther afield for their lawn tennis; A. B. Jones and myself joined the Sydney Lawn Tennis Club. We found even on those perfect courts that our cross-court shots were very effective, and were further developed as a useful plan of campaign.

Whether this stroke is one that lends itself best to what is known as the "Australian" grip, I cannot definitely say, but I do believe that we are able to get a more acute angle and greater pace on the backhand than players who affect the English grip. Conversely, the English grip is the better for pace and angle when it comes to the forearm cross-court volley.

S. N. Doust's Australian forehand grip.

Backhand grip. Note that the same face of the racket is used for both grips.

HOW TO IMPROVE.

By GEORGE STODDART

(*A successful tournament competitor who has greatly improved his game.*)

IN offering a few words of practical advice on improving one's game, may I point out first of all that there is not in the British Isles a single player of international rank whose play has been of quick growth. By "quick growth" I mean that the game has been started and developed to its height in, say, five years or so. I am careful to exclude from this sweeping indictment the overseas players.

The reason for *our* slow development is, I think, the lack of facilities for concentration on the finer points of the game. In the U.S.A., for instance, they start at an early age, and the beginner has opportunities of tuition from champions while his growth is carefully recorded each year. This means that a whole batch of youngsters are feverishly competing against one another over there for promotion, thus providing the U.S.A. with a relay of over forty men equipped with a varied knowledge and the inestimable asset of youth. All this may sound discouraging to English aspirants, but I am far from being despondent about our methods, providing that a little more ginger is infused into the spirit of advancement than has been the case hitherto. May I give a short account of my own struggle to improve? Denied by business all games until I reached the age of twenty-eight, I first took up lawn tennis in 1908, from which year until 1914, by playing in a number of tournaments, I managed to get down to scratch from my original mark (in 1908) of receive 30 in the class B. To do this I visited all the available professionals and made every game I played in a matter of study.

My general physical qualification not being of the best enables me to make this rather bold pronouncement. It is possible in five years for any beginner—up to a reasonable age—thirty-five to forty—to produce a scratch game, while a few more years should see the said player better than scratch and beginning to tread hard on the owe-30 player's preserves.

How is this to be done? First fix your type of stroke for service, overhead play, volley, and drive. Half-volleys and lobs are somewhat obvious in construction, but nevertheless require practice. Study professional methods. Study all the best amateurs' play and draw your own conclusions. Cultivate the critical habit. Be able to write an essay on any match. Notes should be made on every game you play, in which your winning shots and losing shots are described. In each successive match by this means you can eliminate some fault and substitute a good element.

Learn how to time any shot. Correct swing is the correct use of footwork, use of the knees, the trunk turn from the hip, the use of the free and employed shoulder *back and through*. The use of the upper arm, forearm, wrist, the bat face, and, lastly, the ball itself. It is thus that one gains a firm foundation.

The times are very favourable for improvement. I am certain that the beginner of to-day can do wonders with determination, on the lines I have laid down.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE

BY

EDGAR WALLACE

ILLUSTRATED BY
E. VERPILLEUX

COLONEL CHARTRES DANE lingered irresolutely in the broad and pleasant lobby. Other patients had lingered awhile in that agreeable vestibule. On wintry days it was a cosy place, its polished panelled walls reflecting the gleam of logs that burnt in the open fireplace. There was a shining oak settle that invited gossip, and old prints and blue china bowls frothing over with the flowers of a belated autumn or advanced springtide, to charm the eye.

In summer it was cool and dark and restful. The mellow tick of the ancient clock, the fragrance of roses, the soft breeze that came through an open casement stirring the lilac curtains uneasily, these corollaries of peace and order had soothed many an unquiet mind.

Colonel Chartres Dane fingered a button of his light dust-coat and his thin patrician face was set in thought. He was a spare man of fifty-five ; a man of tired eyes and nervous gesture. Dr. Merriget peered at him through his powerful spectacles and wondered.

It was an awkward moment, for the doctor had murmured his sincere, if conventional, regrets and encouragements, and there was nothing left but to close the door on his patient.

" You have had a bad wound there, Mr. Jackson," he said, by way of changing a very gloomy subject and filling in the interval of silence. This intervention might call to mind in a soldier some deed of his ; some far field of battle where men met death with courage and fortitude. Such memories might be helpful to a man under sentence.

Colonel Dane fingered the long scar on his cheek.

" Yes," he said absently ; " a child did that—my niece. Quite my own fault."

" A child ? " Dr. Merriget appeared to be shocked. He was, in reality, very curious.

" Yes—she was eleven—my own fault. I spoke disrespectfully of her father. It was unpardonable, for he was only recently dead. He was my brother-in-law. We were at breakfast and she threw the knife—yes."

He ruminated on the incident and a smile quivered at the corner of his thin lips.

" She hated me. She hates me still—yes."

He waited.

The doctor was embarrassed and came back to the object of the visit.

" I should be ever so much more comfortable in my mind if you saw a specialist, Mr.—er—Jackson. You see how difficult it is for me to give an opinion ? I may be wrong. I know nothing of your history, your medical history, I mean. There are so many men in town who could give you a better and more valuable opinion than I. A county practitioner like myself is rather in a backwater. One has the usual cases that come to one in a small country town, maternity cases, commonplace ailments—it is difficult to keep abreast of the extraordinary developments in medical science."

" Do you know anything about Machonicies College ? " asked the colonel, unexpectedly.

" Yes, of course." The doctor was surprised. " It is one of the best of the technical schools. Many of our best doctors and chemists take a preparatory course there. Why ? "

" I merely asked. As to your specialists—I hardly think I shall bother them."

Dr. Merriget watched the tall figure striding down the red-tiled path between the banked flowers, and was still standing

on the door-step when the whine of his visitor's machine had gone beyond the limits of his hearing.

"H'm," said Dr. Merriget, as he returned to his study. He sat awhile thinking.

"Mr. Jackson?" he said aloud. "I wonder why the colonel calls himself 'Mr. Jackson'?"

He had seen the colonel two years before at a garden party, and had an excellent memory for faces.

He gave the matter no further thought, having certain packing to superintend—he was on the eve of his departure for Constantinople—a holiday trip he had promised himself for years.

Dr. Merriget watched the tall figure striding down the red-tiled path.

On the following afternoon, at Machonicies Technical School, a lecture was in progress.

". . . by this combustion you have secured true K.c.y., which we will now test and compare with the laboratory quantities—a deliquescent and colourless crystal extremely soluble."

The master, whose monotonous voice droned like the hum of a distant big stationary bluebottle, was a middle-aged man to whom life was no more than a chemical reaction, and love not properly a matter for his observation or knowledge. He had an idea that it was dealt with effectively in another department of the college—metaphysics—or was it philosophy? Or maybe it came into the realms of the biological master?

Ella Grant glared resentfully at the crystals which glittered on the blue paper before her, and snapped out the bunsen burner with a vicious twist of finger and thumb. Denman always overshot the hour. It was a quarter past five! The pallid clock above the dais where Professor Denman stood seemed to mock her impatience.

She sighed wearily and fiddled with the apparatus on the bench at which she sat. Some twenty other white-coated girls were also fiddling with test-tubes and bottles and graduated measures, and twenty pairs of eyes glowered at the bald and stooping man who, unconscious of the passing of time, was turning affectionately to the properties of potassium.

"Here we have a metal whose strange affinity for oxygen—eh, Miss Benson?—five? Bless my soul, so it is! Class is dismissed. And ladies, *ladies, ladies!* Please, please let me make myself heard. The laboratory keeper will take from you all chemicals you have drawn for this experiment."

They were crowding towards the door to the change room. Smith, the laboratory man, stood in the entrance grabbing wildly at little green and blue bottles that were thrust at him, and vainly endeavouring by a private system of mnemonics to commit his receipts to memory.

"Miss Fairlie—phial fairly; Miss Jones—bottle bones; Miss Walter—bottle salter . . ."

If at the end of his collection he failed to recall a rhyme to any name, the owner had passed without cashing in.

"Miss Grant——?"

The laboratory of the Analytical Class was empty. Nineteen bottles stood on a shelf and he reviewed them.

"Miss Grant——?"

No, he had said nothing about "aunt" or "can't" or "pant."

He went into the change room, opened a locker and felt in the pockets of the white overall. They were empty. Returning to the laboratory, he wrote in his report book: "Miss Grant did not return experiment bottle."

He spelt experiment with two r's and two m's.

Ella found the bottle in the pocket of her overall as she was hanging it up in the long cubpoard of the change room. She hesitated a moment, frowning resentfully at the little blue phial in her hand, and rapidly calculating the time it would take to return to the laboratory to find the keeper and restore the property. In the end, she pushed it into her bag and hurried from the building. It was not an unusual occurrence that a student overlooked the return of some apparatus, and it could be restored in the morning.

HAD Jack succeeded? That was the thought which occupied her. The miracle about which every junior dreams had happened. Engaged in the prosecution of the notorious Flackman, his leader had been taken ill, and the conduct of the case for the State had fallen to him. He was opposed by two brilliant advocates, and the judge was a notorious humanitarian.

She did not stop to buy a newspaper; she was in a fret at the thought that Jack Freeder might not have waited for her, and she heaved a sigh of relief when she turned into the old-world garden of the court-house and saw him pacing up and down the flagged walk, his hands in his pockets.

"I am so sorry——"

She had come up behind him, and he turned on his heel to meet her. His face spoke success. The elation in it told her everything she wanted to know, and she slipped her arm through his with a queer mingled sense of pride and uneasiness.

"The judge sent for me to his room afterwards and told me that the attorney could not have conducted the case better than I."

"He is guilty?" she asked, hesitating.

"Who, Flackman? I suppose so," he said, carelessly. "His pistol was found in Sinnit's apartment, and it was known that he quarrelled with Sinnit about money, and there was a girl in it, I think, although we have never been able to get sufficient proof of that to put her into the box. You seldom have direct evidence in cases of this character, Ella, and, in many ways, circumstantial evidence is infinitely more damning. If a witness went into the box and said: 'I saw Flackman shoot Sinnit and saw Sinnit die,' the whole case would stand or fall by the credibility of that evidence; prove that witness an habitual liar, and there is no chance of a conviction. On the other hand, when there are six or seven witnesses, all of whom subscribe to some one act or appearance or location of a prisoner, and all agreeing—why, you have him."

She nodded.

Her acquaintance with Jack Freeder had begun on her summer vacation, and had begun romantically but unconventionally when a sailing boat overturned with its occupant pinned beneath the bulging canvas. It was Ella, a magnificent swimmer, who, bathing, had seen the accident and had dived into the sea to the assistance of the drowning man.

"This means a lot to me, Ella," he said earnestly as they turned into the busy street. "It means the foundation of a new life."

His eyes met hers, and lingered for a second, and she was thrilled.

"Did you see Stephanie last night?" he asked suddenly.

She felt guilty.

"No," she admitted, "but I don't think you ought to worry about that, Jack. Stephanie is expecting the money almost by any mail."

"She has been expecting the money almost by any mail, for a month past," he said dryly, "and in the meantime this infernal note is becoming due. What I can't understand——"

She interrupted him with a laugh.

"You can't understand why they accepted my signature as a guarantee for Stephanie's," she laughed, "and you are extremely uncomplimentary!"

Stephanie Boston, her some-time room mate, and now her apartmental neighbour, was a source of considerable worry to Jack

Freeder, although he had only met her once. A handsome, volatile girl, with a penchant for good clothes and a mode of living out of all harmony with the meagre income she drew from fashion plate artistry, she had found herself in difficulties. It was a condition which the wise had long predicted, and Ella, not so wise, had dreaded. And then one day the young artist had come to her with an oblong slip of paper and an incoherent story of somebody being willing to lend her money if Ella would sign her name, and Ella Grant, to whom finance was an esoteric mystery, had cheerfully complied.

"If you were a great heiress, or you were expecting a lot of money coming to you through the death of a relative," persisted Jack with a frown, "I could understand Isaacs being satisfied with your acceptance, but you aren't!"

Ella laughed softly and shook her head.

"The only relative I have in the world is poor dear Uncle Chartres, who loathes me! I used to loathe him too, but I've got over that. After daddy died I lived with him for a few months, but we quarrelled over—over—well, I won't tell you what it was about, because I am sure he was sorry. I had a fiendish temper as a child, and I threw a knife at him."

"Good Lord!" gasped Jack, staring at her.

She nodded solemnly.

"I did—so you see there is very little likelihood of Uncle Chartres, who is immensely rich, leaving me anything more substantial than the horrid weapon with which I attempted to slay him!"

Jack was silent. Isaacs was a professional moneylender—he was not a philanthropist.

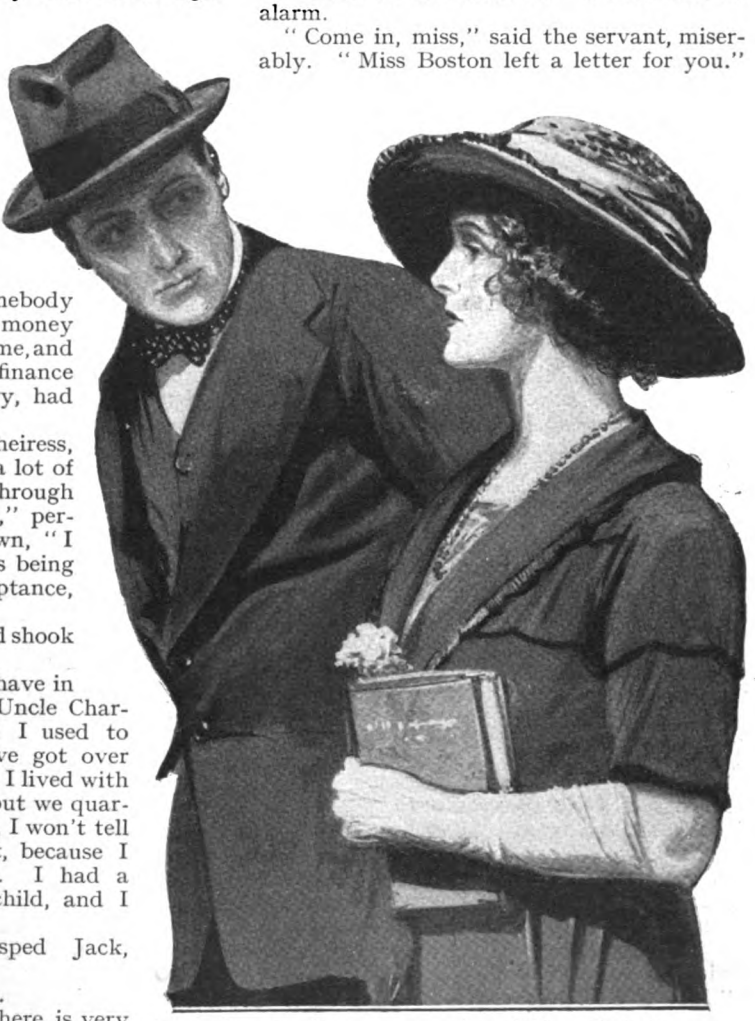
When Ella got home that night she determined to perform an unpleasant duty. She had not forgotten Jack Freeder's urgent insistence upon her seeing Stephanie Boston—she had simply avoided the unpalatable.

Stephanie's flat was on the first floor; her own was immediately above. She considered for a long time before she pressed the bell.

Grace, Stephanie's elderly maid, opened the door, and her eyes were red with recent weeping.

"What is the matter?" asked Ella in alarm.

"Come in, miss," said the servant, miserably. "Miss Boston left a letter for you."



"I had a fiendish temper as a child, and I threw a knife at him." "Good Lord!" gasped Jack.

"Left?" repeated Ella wonderingly. "Has she gone away?"

"She was gone when I came this morning. The bailiffs have been here."

Ella's heart sank.

The letter was short but eminently lucid.

"I am going away, Ella. I do hope that you will forgive me. That wretched bill has become due and I simply cannot face you again. I will work desperately hard to repay you, Ella."

The girl stared at the letter, not realizing what it all meant. Stephanie had gone away!

"She took all her clothes, miss. She left this morning, and told the porter she was going into the country; and she owes me three weeks' wages!"

Ella went upstairs to her own flat, dazed and shaken. She herself had no maid; a woman came every morning to clean the flat, and Ella had her meals at a neighbouring restaurant.

As she made the last turn of the stairs she was conscious that there was a man waiting on the landing above with his back to her door. Though she did not know him, he evidently recognised her, for he raised his hat. She had a dim idea that she had seen him somewhere before, but for the moment could not recollect the circumstances.

"Good evening, Miss Grant," he said amiably. "I think we have met before. Miss Boston introduced me—name of Higgins."

She shook her head.

"I am afraid I don't remember you," she said, and wondered whether his business was in connection with Stephanie's default.

"I brought the paper up that you signed about three months ago."

Then she recalled and went cold.

"Mr. Isaacs didn't want to make any kind of trouble," he said. "The bill became due a week ago and we have been trying to get Miss Boston to pay. As it is, it looks very much as though you will have to find the money."

"When?" she asked in dismay.

"Mr. Isaacs will give you until to-morrow night," said the man. "I've been waiting here since five o'clock to see you. I suppose it is convenient, miss?"

Nobody knew better than Mr. Isaacs' clerk that it would be most inconvenient, not to say impossible, for Ella Grant to produce four hundred pounds.

"I will write to Mr. Isaacs," she said, finding her voice at last.

She sat down in the solitude and dusk of her flat to think things out. She was overwhelmed, numbed by the tragedy. To owe money that she could not pay was to Ella Grant an unspeakable horror.

There was a letter in the letter-box. She had taken it out mechanically when she came in, and as mechanically slipped her fingers through the flap and extracted a folded paper. But she put it down without so much as a glance at its contents.

What would Jack say? What a fool she had been, what a perfectly reckless fool! She had met difficulties before, and had overcome them. When she had left her uncle's house as a child of fourteen and had subsisted on the slender income which her father had left her, rejecting every attempt on the part of Chartres Dane to induce her to leave the home of an invalid maiden aunt where she had taken refuge, she had faced what she believed was the supreme crisis of her life.

But this was different.

Chartres Dane! She rejected the thought instantly, only to find it recurring. Perhaps he would help. She had long since overcome any ill-feeling she had towards him, for whatever dislike she had, had been replaced by a sense of shame and repentance. She had often been on the point of writing him to beg his forgiveness, but had stopped short at the thought that he might imagine she had some ulterior motive in seeking to return to his good graces. He was her relative. He had some responsibility—again the thought inserted itself, and suddenly she made up her mind.

CHARTRES DANE'S house lay twelve miles out of town, a great rambling place set on the slopes of a wooded hill, a place admirably suited to his peculiar love of solitude.

She had some difficulty in finding a taxi-driver who was willing to make the journey, and it had grown dark, though a pale light still lingered in the western skies, when she descended from the cab at the gateway of Hevel House. There was a lodge at the entrance, but this had long since been untenanted. She found her way up the long drive to the columned portico in front of the house. The place was in darkness, and she experienced a pang of apprehension. Suppose he was not there? (Even if he were, he would not help her, she told herself.) But the possibility of his being absent, however, gave her courage.

Her hand was on the bell when there came to her a flash of memory. At such an hour he would be sitting in the big window recess overlooking the lawn at the side of the house. She had often seen him there on warm summer nights, his glass of port on the broad window-ledge, a cigar clenched between his white teeth, brooding out into the darkness.

She came down the steps, and walking on the close-cropped grass bordering the flower-beds, came slowly, almost stealthily, to the library window. The big casement was wide open; a faint light showed within, and she stopped dead, her heart beating a furious rat-a-plan at the sight of a filled glass on the window-ledge. His habits had not changed, she thought; he himself would be sitting just out of sight from where she stood, in that little window recess which was nearest to her. Summoning all her courage, she advanced still farther.

He was not in his customary place, and she crept nearer to the window.

Colonel Chartres Dane was sitting at a large writing-table in the centre of the room; his back was toward her, and he was writing by the light of two tall candles that stood upon the table.

At the sight of his back all her courage failed, and as he rose from the table she shrank back into the shadow. She saw his white hand take up the glass of wine, and after a moment, peeping again, she saw him, still with his back to her, put it on the table by him as he sat down again.

She could not do it, she dared not do it, she told herself, and turned away sorrowfully. She would write to him.

She had stepped from the grass to the path when a man came from an opening in the bushes and gripped her arm.

"Hallo," he said, "who are you, and what are you doing here?"

"Let me go," she cried, frightened. "I—I——"

"What are you doing by the colonel's window?"

"I am his niece," she said, trying to recover some of her dignity.

"I thought you might be his aunt," said the gamekeeper, ironically. "Now, my girl, I am going to take you in to the colonel——"

With a violent thrust she pushed him from her; the man stumbled and fell. She heard a thud and a groan, and stood rooted to the spot with horror.

"Have I hurt you?" she whispered. There was no reply.

She felt, rather than saw, that he had struck his head against a tree in falling, and turning, she flew down the drive, terrified, nearly fainting in her fright. The cabman saw her as she flung open the gate and rushed out.

"Anything wrong?" he asked.

"I—I think I have killed a man," she said incoherently, and then from the other end of the drive she heard a thick voice cry:—

"Stop that girl."

It was the voice of the gamekeeper, and for a moment the blood came back to her heart.

"Take me away, quickly, quickly!" she cried.

The cabman hesitated.

"What have you been doing?" he asked.

"Take—take me away," she pleaded.

Again he hesitated.

"Jump in," he said, gruffly.

THREE weeks later John Penderbury, one of the greatest advocates at the Bar, walked into Jack Freeder's chambers.

The young man sat at his table, his head on his arm, and Penderbury put his hand lightly upon the shoulders of the stricken man.

"You've got to take a hold of yourself, Freeder," he said, kindly. "You will neither help yourself nor her by going under."

Jack lifted a white, haggard face to the lawyer.

"It is horrible, horrible," he said, huskily. "She's as innocent as a baby. What evidence have they?"

"My dear good fellow," said Penderbury, "the only evidence worth while in a case like this is circumstantial evidence. If there were direct evidence we might test the credibility of the witness. But in circumstantial evidence, every piece of testimony dovetails into the other; each witness creates one strand of the net."

"It is horrible, it is impossible, it is madness to think that Ella could——"

Penderbury shook his head. Pulling up a chair at the other side of the table, he sat down, his arms folded, his grave eyes fixed on the younger man.

"Look at it from a lawyer's point of view, Freeder," he said gently. "Ella Grant is badly in need of money. She has backed a bill for a girl friend and the money is suddenly demanded. A few minutes after learning this from Isaacs' clerk, she finds a letter in her flat, which she has obviously read—the envelope was opened and its contents extracted—a letter which is from Colonel Dane's lawyers, telling her that the colonel has made her his sole heiress. She knows, therefore, that the moment the colonel dies she will be a rich woman. She has in her handbag a bottle containing cyanide of potassium, and that night, under the cover of darkness, drives to the colonel's house and is seen outside the library window by Colonel Dane's gamekeeper. She admitted, when she was questioned by the detective, that she knew the colonel was in the habit of sitting by the window and that he usually put his glass of port on the window-ledge. What was easier than to drop a fatal dose of cyanide into the wine? Remember, she admitted that she had hated him and that once she threw a knife at him, wounding him, so that the scar remained to the day of his death. She admitted herself that it was his practice to put the wine where she could have reached it."

He drew a bundle of papers from his pocket, unfolded them, and turned the leaves rapidly.

"Here it is," and he read:—

"Yes, I saw a glass of wine on the window-ledge. The colonel was in the habit of sitting in the window on summer evenings.

I have often seen him there, and I knew when I saw the wine that he was near at hand."

He pushed the paper aside and looked keenly at the wretched man before him.

"She is seen by the gamekeeper, as I say," he went on, "and this man, attempting to intercept her, she struggles from his grasp and runs down the drive to the cab. The cabman says she was agitated, and when he asked her what was the matter, she replied that she had killed a man——"

"She meant the gamekeeper," interrupted Jack.

"She may or may not, but she made that statement. There are the facts, Jack; you cannot get past them. The letter from the lawyers—which she says she never read—the envelope was found open and the letter taken out; is it likely that she had not read it? The bottle of cyanide of potassium was found in her possession, and"—he spoke deliberately—"the colonel was found dead at his desk and death was due to cyanide of potassium. A candle which stood on his desk had been overturned by him in his convulsions, and the first intimation the servants had that anything was wrong was the sight of the blazing papers on the table, which the gamekeeper saw, when he returned to report what had occurred in the grounds. There is no question what verdict the jury will return."

IT was a great and fashionable trial. The court-house was crowded, and the public had fought for the few places that were vacant in the gallery.

Sir Johnson Grey, the Attorney-General, was to lead for the prosecution, and Penderbury had Jack Freeder as his junior.

The opening of the trial was due for ten o'clock, but it was half-past ten when the Attorney-General and Penderbury came into the court, and there was a light in Penderbury's eyes and a smile on his lips which amazed his junior.

Jack had only glanced once at the pale, slight prisoner. He dared not look at her.

"What is the delay?" he asked irritably. "This infernal judge is always late."

At that moment the court rose as the judge came on to the bench, and almost immediately afterwards the Attorney-General was addressing the Court.

"My lord," he said, "I do not purpose offering any evidence in this case on behalf of the Crown. Last night I received from Dr. Merriget, an eminent practitioner of Townville, a sworn statement on which I purpose examining him.

'Dr. Merriget," the Attorney-General went on, "has been travelling in the Near East, and a letter which was sent to him by the late Colonel Dane only reached him a week ago, coincident with the doctor learning that these proceedings had been taken against the prisoner at the bar.

"Dr. Merriget immediately placed himself in communication with the Crown officers of the law, as a result of which I am in a position to tell your lordship that I do not intend offering evidence against Ella Grant.

"Apparently Colonel Dane had long suspected that he was suffering from an incurable disease, and to make sure, he went to Dr. Merriget and submitted himself to an examination. The reason for his going to a strange doctor is that he did not want to have it known that he had been consulting specialists in town. The doctor confirmed his worst fears, and Colonel Dane returned to his home. Whilst on the Continent, the doctor received a letter from Colonel Dane which I purpose reading."

He took a letter from the table, adjusted his spectacles and read:—

"Dear Dr. Merriget: It occurred to me after I had left you the day before yesterday that you must have identified me, for I have a dim recollection that we met at a garden party. I am not, as you suggested, taking any other advice. I know too well that this fibrous growth is beyond cure, and I purpose to-night taking a fatal dose of cyanide of potassium. I feel that I must notify you in case by a mischance there is some question as to how I met my death.

"Very sincerely yours,
"CHARTRES DANE."

"I feel that the ends of justice will be served," continued the Attorney-General, "if I call the doctor."

IT was not very long before another Crown case came the way of Jack Freeder. A week after his return from his honeymoon, he was sent for to the Public Prosecutor's office, and that gentleman interviewed him.

"You did so well in the Flackman case, Freeder, that I want you to undertake the prosecution of Wise. Undoubtedly you will gain kudos in a trial of this description, for the Wise case has attracted a great deal of attention."

"What is the evidence?" asked Jack, bluntly.

"Circumstantial, of course," said the Public Prosecutor; "but——"

"Hallo," he said, "who are you, and what are you doing here?"

Jack shook his head.

"I think not, sir," he said firmly, but respectfully. "I will not prosecute in another case of murder unless the murder is committed in my presence."

The Public Prosecutor stared at him.

"That means you will never take another murder prosecution—have you given up criminal work, Mr. Freeder?"

"Yes, sir," said Jack gravely; "my wife doesn't like it."

To-day Jack Freeder is referred to in legal circles as a glaring example of how a promising career can be ruined by marriage.

HORACE

by

J·H·W·KNIGHT-BRUCE

ILLUSTRATED BY
A.T. SMITH

"AND what d'you do here?" The long man in the grey flannel trousers and shooting coat looked out of the window of the tin hut as he spoke. He spent little of his time under a roof, and when he was there his eyes seemed unconsciously to seek open country.

"The Lowton links are only a couple of miles off, sir." A stocky man in unreal knickerbockers spoke.

"That's something. Anything else?" He bent forward to follow the long swoop of a hawk across the panes.

There was silence, while the Mess thought: they felt they must uphold the honour of the camp before the stranger.

"There's a little cricket at Redling in the Hollow," was the result of the silent brain work, "but that's about all till the First. Unless you count Horace." This was obviously an afterthought.

"Horace Who?" asked the long man, who was called Trevor. Major Trevor.

"There's only one Horace," answered a stout man, Prendergast by name. He spoke almost with reverence.

Trevor yawned. "*Edite regibus?*" he queried, with his hand over his mouth.

Prendergast grinned. "No, *piscibus*. He's a trout. *The* trout."

"In the big pool below the ——"

"But no one's ever ——"

"A smasher, a real smasher. Big as a ——"

"And wily as Satan. No one's ever ——"

"Even Rawlinson only foul-hooked him and got smashed. And *that* was——"

"I wasted three weeks over him."

"And I wasted a month this year and two months ——"

They had been on the range all day—it was a musketry camp—and had just got back in time to change for tea and had been awaiting its arrival rather sleepily. But the word Horace seemed to have roused them.

Trevor allowed his eyes to travel round the eager circle.

"He seems well known," he hazarded.

"He *is*," agreed Prendergast. "He's the feature of the camp. Rawlinson tried for him every summer for years, and he's sworn to try again when he gets back from Africa. He was offered a rod on the Test one year, but couldn't bear to leave Horace. And there are others, *quorum pars parva*. He's an obsession. You fish, sir?"

"Sometimes. I suppose I ought to give Horace a chance of adding me to his bag."

"You *must*. It's the right thing to do. Most people go down their first evening. And their second. And so on. And the wiser they are, the less so on there is."

Trevor rose. "Then I must be off. It would never do to be out of fashion."

"But you'd better have tea, sir," put in the man in knickerbockers. "It's just due. And you've had a long walk from the station."

Trevor looked at his watch. "This is just the right time," he said. "But where does your friend live?"

They told him and he strolled out of the Mess. A red setter, lank and rangy as only a setter can be, drew back her stricken nose as the door opened. She had had it glued to the crack. She crouched on bent hocks as her soft eyes met his, eager to jump up in demonstrative welcome.

"No, Nell," he negatived. "Hallo, McAndrew, you got down all right, then?"

"Yes, sir. By the 12.8 train, last night." McAndrew's accent was rich and grating, but not to be reproduced phonetically by any mere Sassenach. "And at what time will you be wishing the horses, the night, sir?"

"Er, none. I had thought of riding, but I've changed my mind. I'm going fishing."

McAndrew looked at him dourly. "And where's the fush, sir?" he asked.

"In the Becket. Trout, you know."

"Trout!" McAndrew's scorn was bitter. "I thought you said fush. I'll take them for an hour on the road."

There was no hint of interrogation in this statement, but more than a hint of disapproval. He was grimly silent for a space, then he let drop, as a matter of no particular interest, "May Queen's fat."

"Yes, I know. I'll have her out and take some of it off her in a day or two."

"Pig fat. She sweated butter yesterday from the station."

"Well, there's a month yet for her to get rid of that."

"If she's ridden."

"She'll be ridden all right. And I said I'd go fishing to-night."

"You'll be coming to see them first."

"Yes, come along."

McAndrew had to be content with that for the time. But if his granite face read aright, he was not very contented.

His charges were his pride. And they were worthy of it.

Trevor looked at them and went away, leaving McAndrew to his task. And Nell and he went back to the tin huts and he unstrapped a much-used greenheart from his golf clubs, wound a few casts round his old tweed hat, and wandered off. At four and a half miles an hour.

THE Becket was a lovely stream. Both for an artist and a fisherman. It dipped uncertainly down from the great granite hills in laughing joy, too happy to care what course it took so long as it hurried on fast enough. Then, as it aged, it developed purpose and flowed steadily and soberly down the rolling vales. Now hedged in between banks of its own cutting, now rustling over pebble shallows, but only occasionally pausing in its purposeful way to swing aimlessly round the stillness of some great pool.

Barron Pool was one of these. Becket purled straight and fleet and narrow for three hundred yards above it and felt it had earned a rest. It narrowed still more to shoulder through the high granite bridge that carried the road over it without a pier. The bridge *was* high. Why, no one knew, for Becket never flooded. But the road seemed to check at the bank and buck over the stream like a green horse, when it might have much better skimmed it in its stride. But there is no accounting for roads; any more than there is for green horses.

From the bridge foot the water widened, silent, deep, and dark. And it escaped thoughtfully, without any undue hurry, at the far bottle-neck end.

And somewhere in between lived Horace.

The top of the pool was open and Trevor, Nell down charged behind, walked up to that end and jucked in a cast of flies. They alighted well (he was a pretty caster) and went circling down to the bank. He drew them up-stream, swung them behind him and let them go again. With no better luck. He fished carelessly down the pool and then reeled in. He was not a careless fisherman as a rule, but he really had come out for the walk. Horace had only been its excuse.

"Well, Nell, we haven't wiped their eyes this time, have we? Come and see what else there's doing."

There seemed quite a lot. The small fry down-stream were rising eagerly, and Trevor's waterproof poacher pockets were soon full of grass and quarter-pounders. He had brought no bag.

He stayed on, held by the magic of the deepening twilight, till the little stream was purling almost unseen beneath him and he had to judge his recoveries by guesswork. He who has fished on through the dusk in the shrill ripple of a stream will know how he stayed. And perhaps why.

"Come along, Nell, we'll have to hurry," he said, as he took the road, clanging beneath his nailed heels. "Or we shall be late for Mess. I rather wish I'd spent more time over that big 'un. It's annoying to be beat."

As he opened the door of his hut there was a gurgle and splash of falling water. Private Foster had through long experience learnt to a nicety the art of getting his master ready for Mess in an incredibly short time. The bath ready, he disappeared. As the splashing died down he reappeared and held out a white shirt. Trevor dived into it and out the other side, while Private Foster produced the Wellingtons, ready boot-hooked and with the overalls doubled down over them to their spurs and back to their tops. Three seconds disposed of them, and Private Foster was ready with white collar in one hand and black tie in the other. And a second later with blue waistcoat and red Mess jacket.

His master was a source of pain to him. He had been a soldier for twenty-two years, and the ignominy of being late on parade was deeply bitten into him. Mess was a parade: he knew that. And he would see to it that his master wasn't late for it. Hence this elaborate system, which took ten and a half minutes exactly. If the Major arrived at a less time than that before eight, Private Foster would permit himself an expostulation. He did so to-night as he handed over the white-topped cap.

"Beg pardin, sir, but would you explain to the Mess Sergeant?"

"Call me at four," said Trevor, as he put it on. "Explain what?" he asked.

" 'Bout my being kept, sir. I shall be late for waiters' parade."

" Oh, are you waiting to-night ? Yes, I see you're in livery. Tell the Sergeant I'm sorry, you know, and it sha'n't occur again."

Then Private Foster rose. " Beg pardin, sir, but I've a-told 'im that before. Frequent."

" Not *this* Mess Sergeant, you know," said Trevor, soothingly. " We only came to-day. He may believe you."

" Yessir," said Private Foster, doubtingly, as the Major jangled away. " And I shouldn't mind so much," he soliloquized as he picked up the Major's coat. " —— Blimy ! What's that ? If he 'asn't a-got 'is pockets full of fish. Like a bloomin' conjurer. Well, 'e *is* a caution ! What was I a-thinkin' abaht ? Oh, I know. I shouldn't mind so much if 'e got late for Mess a-drinkin' in the ante-room or summat respectable like that. But 'e's out in them damn fields all day and most of the night getting 'is clothes mucked up 'orrid. Always back late, and late again to-night. The bugles 'as gone five minutes."

" Blimy ! If he 'asn't a-got 'is pockets full of fish. Like a bloomin' conjurer."

Private Foster was right. The long match-boarded room was alight with different mess kits as Trevor came in. Prendergast was President and answered Trevor's apology with a " Not-at-all—sir—What—luck ? "

" None with Horace," answered Trevor, as he took the empty place next him.

Prendergast grinned delightedly, and a ripple went down the table, *habitués* of the camp passing it down that Horace had scored yet again, and new hands asking who Horace might be.

Then everyone talked Horace and explained to Trevor his great record and told him stories of his prowess.

" Why, even Rawlinson only rose him seldom, and he *was* a fisherman." That seemed the burden of the song. Trevor learnt how Rawlinson had in two successive years persuaded Horace to suck a brilliantly presented May fly in between his cautious lips, only to spit it out in disgust each time : how Rawlinson had once, as Horace came up to look at a tiny blue dun and then turned a somersault round it as a sulky old trout will, had once with a lightning strike foul-hooked him, and how then Horace had darted up under the bridge and smashed the fragile tapered cast against the granite : how Rawlinson, driven to desperation, had even sunk to lying for hours dapping for him : how Rawlinson had done this : how Rawlinson had done that : how Rawlinson was only waiting to come back from Africa to do it all again : till poor Trevor began to get a little tired of the name Rawlinson.

" We'll show you his record in the Game Book after Mess," promised Andrews, the man who had worn the knickerbockers at tea. " It goes back for years. Of course the book's really only for game actually accounted for, but anyone who has even got Horace to take an interest in him puts the fact down and is prouder of it than of creeling most fish."

The great pigskin-bound book was given to Trevor and he read there, amongst totals of snipe and pheasant and partridge and lesser unbaptised fish, the record of Horace. And oftenest against the name of Horace was the name, first of E. G. Rawlinson, Royal Loamshire Fusiliers, and then of Captain E. G. Rawlinson, Royal Loamshire Fusiliers. And in the column of Remarks Rawlinson had given the fly to which Horace had risen, or the conditions which made him rise, or some other help for those on whom his mantle might fall.

" A sportsman, anyhow, " thought Trevor, as he went off to bed.

At the end of the Game Book some painstaking enthusiast had made a sort of analysis

of Horace's favourite lures, and as he rolled over to go to sleep this table suddenly seemed to appear to Trevor as if it had been painted in luminous paint on the wall. There it was, all neatly squared and headed along the top "Wet" with a long bracket under it reaching horizontally three-quarters across the table, and "Dry" with a shorter bracket, and "May" with yet a shorter one again. And under the brackets seemed to burn in the neat, square printing of the unknown compiler, "Black and Blea," "Prince Charlie," "Woodcock and Hare's Ear." "Cock-y-bonddhu," "Dotterell and Yellow," "Greenwell's Glory," and others. And divided by a neat vertical red line, "Pale Watery Dun (f)," "Cinnamon Sedge," "Sherry Spindery (m)," "Adjutant Blue," "Rough-bootied Olive," "Welshman's Button (f)," and again, curtained off by that red line, "Egyptian Goose," "Loch Erne May," "Summer Duck (Detached Body)," "Green May (m)," "Dyed Drake," "Spent Gnat (f)."

And down the side were the months and years of Horace's fame, and by casting out from the neat numbers spattered over the chart such information could be gathered as that he had risen once to a Wickham's Fancy in June, 19——.

It was a wonderful chart.

"Oh, hang it," thought Trevor, irritably, as he turned over again, "anyone would think I cared about banking the beastly thing. What did you say?"

"Four o'clock, sir." Private Foster spoke firmly: he knew he had to. There may have been some small interval between Trevor's two last sentences, but he could not remember any. This made him irritable and ill-inclined to receive the advance of a lanky figure—longer than ever in the rising mist—as he went out.

"And at what time will you be wishing the horses the night, sir?" said the figure.

Trevor looked at him surlily. This horrible Caledonian had got up in the middle of the night especially to make him do a thing he didn't want to do.

"I don't think I shall want them to-day," he said. And then as the silence grew unbearable, "I thought of going fishing. You may take them out again yourself."

"Fushing!" seemed to rise bitterly and hardly audibly with the cold mist, and as cold as it. Then, "You'll be kenning I canna ride *and* lead the noo?" A bandaged hand was thrust under Trevor's nose.

"Yes, of course. I hope your cut's better."

McAndrew disdained the olive branch, but went on relentlessly, "And you willna let the soldier mount." Trevor had a soldier groom to help with the horses.

"I will not," said Trevor, firmly. "You remember what happened last time. You and he can lead 'em out."

"Ay. May Queen's fat."

"So you told me yesterday," answered the Major, politely. "Now I must get on to the range."

"You'll be wishing the horses the morn?"

But the Major had escaped at last.

HE probably would have had them out the next day. Only, unfortunately, he took such pains this time with Horace that that fastidious gentleman actually sucked in his Mallard and gold. Trevor struck. No fault could be found with the striking. But—he was using last year's gut, for he had only brought down odd scrapments of tackle with him. And his cast whipped angrily back at him as Horace retired to think out a way of getting rid of that very unpleasant thing sticking in his upper lip.

Trevor's interest in Horace had up to that moment been rather half-hearted. But he had a fault: he could give up no duel with the wild if he began it by being bested.

His regiment had many tales about the length to which he would then go. One of how, out after an evilly known man-eater, he had happened in thick jungle on a herd of bison. A snap shot enraged without crippling the big bull, and Trevor spent some hours up a huge peepul tree. Released, he gave up the man-eater to the rest of the party and disappeared. Three weeks later he walked out of the jungle without his rifle, and with his arm in a sling, but with the huge head borne behind him. The rifle had been crushed underfoot in the bull's last red-eyed charge.

So he took the tiny telegraph office on his way home and wrote out a long telegram beginning, "Mrs. Trevor, Green Lawns, Lutworth, Leicestershire. Send immediately number. three rod, number two fly box, pocket oil bottle ——"

"I wonder how he likes the Floaters, Nell," he asked as he took the road again.

Then, of course, he had to explain to McAndrew that again the next day he would not exercise. It was a dreadful interview and it can hardly be given in full. It would sound impossible.

Finally he had to make a clean breast of it.

"Look here, McAndrew," he tried to explain, "I've been broke by this fish and it's made me determined he'll be caught. See?"

"Meaning you'll not be wishing the horses till he *is* caught?"

"Er—no. But I've great hopes of the Dry Fly to-morrow."

"You have?" McAndrew, dryly scornful, turned away.

The next day's firing seemed very long.

He lifted the sack by its closed end, and Trevor saw through its folds some heavy body roll down to the grass.

The Horace fever had attacked Trevor badly and he rushed as soon as possible to the Mess. Yes, there was the rod. He could almost feel its few ounces of built cane flipping in his hand. Could almost see its polished lengths through their protection of paper and sacking and stout bamboo case. He picked it up and rushed out of the Mess. To be met by McAndrew. And the soldier groom (" a poor body," McAndrew held). And the horses.

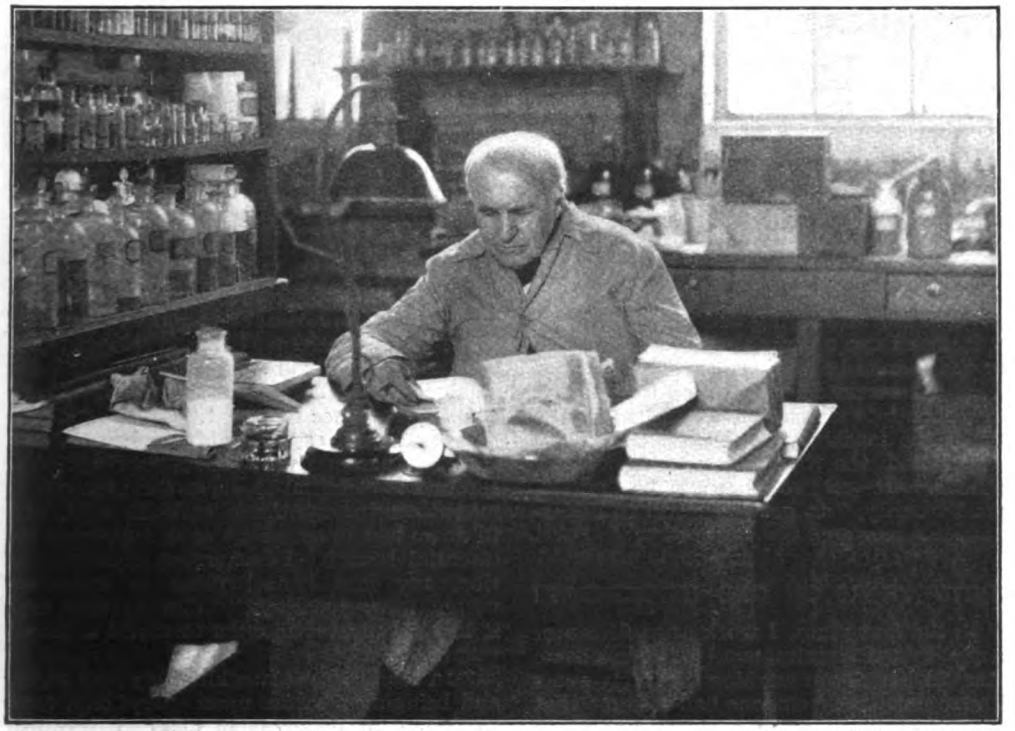
" You'll be wishing the horses, sir ? " McAndrew asked, grimly. Grimly, and yet a curious savage subdued joy, seemed underlying his grimness.

" No," said Trevor. The worm had turned. He spoke angrily. " I told you so yesterday."

" You was saying that you wouldn't be she gave me time with my one hand, that it wouldn't be your father who'd be leaving his horses fat before the season to catch a fush. And I had a bit piece of string with me. And a hook, and on it a wur-r-rm. And as I rode over the bridge I loosed them. And—well, you'll be seeing."

He had a sack by his side. This he lifted up by its closed end, and Trevor, horror growing with slow comprehension, saw through its folds some heavy body roll down its length to the grass. But half the neck of the sack yet lay on the ground and guarded the secret of what it held. McAndrew's hand holding the other end, began to rise inexorably.

" Don't ! " pleaded Trevor. " Oh, please, don't ! You've won. Give me May Queen."



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EDISON'S VIEWS
UPON VITAL HUMAN PROBLEMS

An Interview given to Shaw Desmond for the readers of "The Strand Magazine."

A GIANT steel-framed building that looked as though it had been made of metal frames laid on the ground, cement-filled, like teeth, and so reared into position; ten thousand wheels humming like angry bees; an old deal table, worth perhaps five shillings; and at the table a gentle, beautiful old gentleman with the most wonderful smile on earth.

That was Thomas Alva Edison, the world's greatest wizard, as I found him in his laboratories at West Orange, New Jersey, to ask him for his views upon the problems facing the human race—those vital problems which, in the opinion of many of the first thinkers and scientists, will decide once and for all whether our White Civilization is to go on or go under.

As I looked at the kindly, grey-blue eyes and saw the head slue round to smile with that shrewd, all-embracing smile, the nonsense of "the Edison legend" burst upon me. The real Edison was not a remote, heavy-faced scientist, but a very human man.

"What I want to know," I said, shouting into his right ear (Edison has been very deaf ever since, as a newsboy, he was lifted by a brutal train conductor from his feet by his ears), after we had shaken hands and I had gingerly taken a seat at the old table in the midst of that humming floor and the wheels that each instant threatened death

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to the unwary, " is the problems which you regard as the most important to the race, what you are doing to solve these problems, how you think the next war will be fought, and whether your experiments with your ' spirit-finder ' for the purpose of seeing if life goes on after death have met with success."

Edison just laughed at me, his face lighting up at the " fool questions "—or rather at the way in which I had lumped together a mass of questions that would and did take some hours of answering and explanation.

" Before I can answer those questions in a way that would be intelligible to you or your readers," he said, in a voice so low that it was difficult to catch the words above the hum of the machinery, " I want to explain to you and the world something of my methods. It is so hard," he added, almost wearily, " to get the world to understand.

THIRTY YEARS ON ONE EXPERIMENT!

" In the first place, I work upon fifteen or twenty things simultaneously. Upon some of them I have been working for thirty years without success " (someone had told me that Edison had made upon one problem alone some ten thousand separate experiments !). " They embrace all branches of science. I do not concentrate upon the problem of any single branch to the exclusion of others."

As he spoke it came to the listener what it must have meant for a man to work thirty years upon a single problem and still indefatigably to pursue the road to the unknown goal—a goal that might never be reached. One of the great man's assistants told me that such a work meant the initiation and abandonment of, literally, thousands of experiments, hundreds of sleepless nights, with, at last, perhaps failure complete.

" You know," went on the inventor, " the popular idea that an inventor is a man who sits in an arm-chair with wrinkled brow waiting for a brain-flash has no existence in fact. The idea for a new invention *may* come in a flash, but in the vast majority of cases it comes through desperately hard and often financially thankless work extending over years. The goal attained, there yet remains the scarcely less and often much more difficult task of making the invention ' practical.' "

An excellent example of this is " wireless telegraphy." Hertz had a brain-flash about the " Hertzian waves," but if Marconi had never come along to make it commercially applicable, the Hertzian wave might as well never have existed.

Edison himself, really, although it is almost unknown, was the pioneer in " wireless " so long ago as 1875, when in his experiments upon " Etheric Force," although he did not realize it at the time, he had the germ of wireless telegraphy and harnessing the world by electric wave-lengths. It is, however, the Edison genius for the " practical " which, as a rule, makes his inventions so fascinating.

"SYNTHETIC WHEAT."

I wanted to get Mr. Edison's ideas upon the possibility of the future scientist making everything from rubber to wheat synthetically. It is constantly being prophesied that the human race will soon abandon the beefsteak for the tabloid, and the loaf for " concentrated essence of wheat."

" Early in 1915," he said, " when the war stopped the supply of benzol to the States, I found it essential to solve the problem of manufacturing synthetic carbolic acid, and to do so had to secure an even supply of the essential benzol. I had, after experimentation, my first benzol plant in operation within forty-five days." (Up to this time it had taken nine months to instal a benzol plant.)

" In March, 1915, working day and night, and bringing pressure upon everybody, from workman to department chief, I installed and operated, within forty-five days also, big plants for rubber, and also was making synthetic carbolic acid at the rate of seven thousand pounds a day."

If wheat ceased to grow upon the planet to-morrow, Edison would probably invent " synthetic wheat " within a month or so, with which he would feed the world. He does not know the meaning of " can't." It is certainly quite within the bounds of possibility that within a generation or two the inventions of men like Edison will enable the human race to " live synthetically " if it prove desirable, and to " make " everything, from clothes to food, without going either to the sheep or the plant for them.

EDISON SOLVES THE LONDON TRAFFIC PROBLEM.

Before coming to the epoch-making problems, I pointed out to the great man that amongst the most urgent and " irritating " problems facing the inhabitants of great cities like London and New York was the traffic problem. It has been repeatedly asserted that London, for example, through the impossibility of farther crowding of the streets with motor-buses and the similar impossibility of burrowing farther underground, had reached her limits of expansion. What was his solution ? I ventured to give a solution of my own. It was " to go up into the air."

I was once more astonished to find how Mr. Edison, in solving this urgent, dangerous problem, not only, so to speak, did not " go up in the air," but kept his feet upon solid earth, and even rooted them deep in that earth.

" You have been suggesting," he said, " that the way to solve the London problem, for example, is to take the foot passengers up to the roof-tops in elevators from central clearing stations, each elevator to hold four or five hundred people, place them in electric passenger boats slung from overhead cables, much as the modern electric tram is driven, and so transport them easily and evenly out to suburbs stretching twenty to thirty miles out or more. But I ask you the following question : ' Why go up in the air when it is possible to go down into the earth ? ' " The grey-blue eyes twinkled.

" But," I replied, " the earth in London, for instance, is already so honeycombed that buildings like St. Paul's Cathedral are beginning to subside."

" Then go deeper," was his comment.

" What is to prevent people going down two or three or five hundred feet ? What does it matter if a man takes four or five seconds more on the downward journey than it takes him at present to reach the Tubes ? Why not lay underneath London a spider's web of ' tuppenny tubes '—and then, if needs be, another web of tubes underneath that again ? "

He then showed how, at the " rush hours," the whole floating population of London, instead of the usual nightly orgy in their attempts to reach home and rest, could be cleared out of the heart of the city within the space of an hour or two without crowding or inconvenience.

" In London you are built on chalk," said Edison. " Then go down into the chalk—which is as easy to excavate as it is to scoop the heart out of a soft Stilton. Build your tubes deeper and multiply them as much as you like.

" What the engineers have done in the deep-level mines of the Transvaal they can do in London. Of course, it is not unfeasible ' to go up in the air,' as you suggest; but here in America, for example, and even in London, heavy storms are constantly causing trouble to overhead cables and wires. Go down. That is the solution."

"WE SHALL HARNESS THE EARTH."

Since Professor Rutherford has " split the atom " and so possibly unleashed the beginning of the limitless power known as " atomic energy," it has been predicted by various scientists of the first rank that humanity is about to enter upon a new age, in which such costless energy will cause cyclonic changes in the life of the average man. This I ventured to put to the one man in the world who could give a really definite answer to the question as to whether we were on the threshold of " power without cost."

" Quite apart from atomic energy," said Thomas Alva Edison, " the motion of the earth alone as it turns on its axis and sweeps through space would give us all the light, power, and heat that we want, and a thousand times over."

" But is there any chance we shall ever be able to harness this source of power, which really means driving the earth in harness ? "

" Some day," said Edison, after careful thought, " we may harness that motion. Not only that, but one day we may harness the rise and fall of the tides and imprison the rays of the sun." (Incidentally, this last has already been accomplished, upon a small scale, by Tesla, the great American electrician.)

I ventured to indicate that if ever mankind did so harness these limitless sources of power it would at one stroke wipe out all differences between Capital and Labour, simply because, labour-power being abolished through such unlimited, costless power, and the price to be paid to labour being to-day the only bone of contention between the workman and the employer, the Labour Question would cease to exist.

Edison smiled his inscrutable smile of the child as he spoke in that low voice of his in answer to my remark.

" Struggle is inherent in humanity, not only upon questions of wages and hours, but upon questions of infinitely greater import and sweep. It is certainly inherent between the man who has and the man who hasn't—between the ' Haves ' and the ' Have-nots.' The coming of limitless cheap power, as it will one day come, will not change that inherent vital principle so deep in humanity which is the mainspring of evolution. However limitless such power, however easy of application, no human being can live long without work. Individuals, here and there, may do so for a time, but eventually the restless, struggling human will find work of one kind or another to do. The pleasure of idleness is one of the great superstitions of the world. Such work may not always take the same form—but it will be work, whatever its form."

HIS VIEWS UPON THE LABOUR PROBLEM.

And then this kindly gentleman, smiling in gentle derision, used the following notable words : " The trouble between Capital and Labour is that the workman does not grasp the complexity of the modern system of manufacture and production, and the thousand and one problems attaching themselves

to such a power-problem as that to which you refer. Also, the capitalists have too many ' stinkers ' among them."

His face lighted up in one great, illuminating smile as he used the expressive word.

He made it quite clear within a few sentences that he personally could not conceive of any real change in the modern competitive system—or perhaps, rather, in the principle of competitive stress as the great spur to evolution being replaced by something entirely different. One felt, however, that Edison would be quite prepared to guarantee a living wage, and so secure the life-standard for all workmen, if the workman on his part would guarantee to do his utmost when at work. Once more, it is the humanness of the " Wizard " which makes him so attractive.

His close friend, Mr. W. L. Saunders, who, during the great war, helped him in the running of the Inventions Bureau, told me a characteristic story of this " humanness."

It seems that some time ago it was decided, at an international gathering of iron and steel experts in the United States, that a pilgrimage should be made to the man who is regarded throughout the world by his scientific comrades with reverence as the doyen of them all. Mr. Saunders, the chief of the Ingersoll Drill Company, and one of the greatest living engineers, happened to be with Edison at the very moment when they both discerned in the distance a confused mass of eminent iron and steel experts pouring up the avenue to pay their respects to the great man.

Edison, with the extreme modesty that is his, turned around in despair looking for a place to which to flee, and was only with difficulty brought back to the realities of the situation by his friend, who stood by his side as a long line was formed of the visitors, who, each of them, as he shook hands with Mr. Edison, by this time in a perfectly bewildered condition, presented his card. After a while the inventor's hand was full of cards, of which he relieved himself as well as he could by handing them to his friend. At last, however, he could stand it no longer, and throwing all the cards in his hand into the fireplace, he fairly bolted to his workshop below, where his friend found him on his knees before a new electric rock drill, which he declared would put Mr. Saunders himself " out of business "—this with the glee of a child. He had completely forgotten his eminent visitors.

TERRIFYING MACHINE TO END WAR FOR EVER.

The one intellect in the world which might conceivably be able to abolish war from the earth is that of Edison.

" There will one day," he said to me, " spring from the brain of science a machine or force so fearful in its potentialities, so absolutely terrifying, that even man, the fighter, who will dare torture and death in order to inflict torture and death, will be appalled, and so will abandon war for ever."

Edison does not believe for one moment that we are at the end of wars. On the contrary, he made it perfectly clear that in his view the world is just on the very edge of new and gargantuan wars, wars in which civilization itself may disappear.

" My solution for war," he said, with quiet emphasis, " is not Peace Congresses alone. It is ' preparation.' Preparation, not provocation, and this preparation or preparedness may one day involve the discovery of some terrific force, some engine of war the employment of which would mean annihilation for the opposing forces. The way to make war impossible is for the nations to go on experimenting, and to keep up to date with their inventions, so that war will be unthinkable, and therefore impossible. War is the desperate, vital problem of our time.

" War will never be made impossible until men are convinced by definite demonstration that it is impossible, Germany, in particular, must be shown that any dreams she may entertain of revenge, and of ' whipping France,' cannot materialize, that the world even now has such weapons that the dream of a new Teutonic World Power can never be revived, that mankind has passed the stage of the ' goose-step ' and the sword. War has already been made an affair of chemicals, and no longer a picturesque display. The instant that it can be demonstrated to the German brain that with the new inventions, even though she may wipe out her enemies, she herself will in that moment also be wiped out, she will see the futility of war and revenge."

THE COMING WAR OF POISON-GAS.

And then Mr. Edison said, slowly and with emphasis : " The next great war will be fought out with poison-gas. *Gas and the aeroplane will be the decisive factors.*"

Being anxious to get his views upon what has been regarded by so many scientists as the force which will probably, by reason of its terible possibilities, make war impossible —atomic energy—I asked Mr. Edison whether there was any prospect, now that Professor Rutherford had split the atom, of unleashing such energy, which is of such potency that the atomic energy in half a glass of water is said to be strong enough to lift the British Navy to the top of Mount Everest ?

The great inventor said : " So far as I can see, we have not yet reached the point where

this exhaustless force can be harnessed and utilized. There is nothing to hang the imagination on. It may come some day. As a matter of fact, I am already experimenting along the lines of gathering information at my laboratory here."

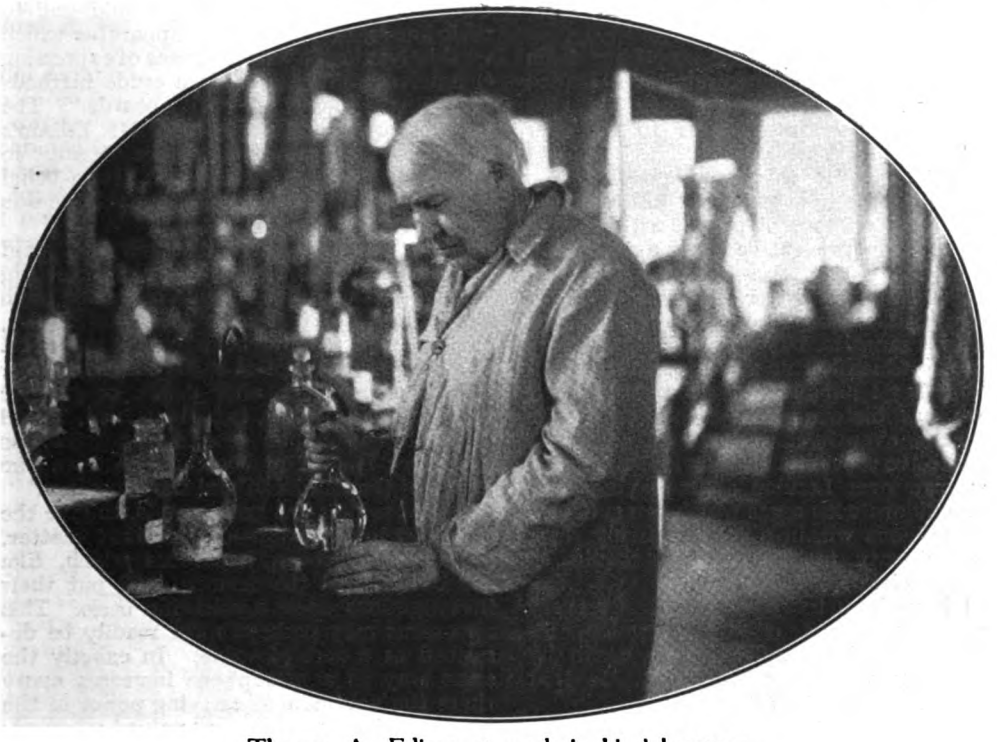
On being informed that an "atomic engine" was already being advertised in England, Mr. Edison laughed. "The atomic engine is still only a dream," he said. "It is the French scientists who are always sending these things out.

"Before we manage to harness atomic energy, we shall solve other problems. We shall possibly utilize the motion of the earth through space. Another source of enormous power, already harnessed, is that of the volcano, and as a matter of fact they are already getting some thousands of horse-power from the volcanoes in the Apennines—the backbone of Italy.

"So far as atomic energy is concerned, there is nothing in sight just now." Mr. Edison paused a moment, and then added, thoughtfully, as though visualizing something, "Although to-morrow some discovery might be made. Some quite dissimilar but collateral problem might open up this field by accident. Very often it happens that a discovery is made whilst working upon quite another problem."

The question was then put to Mr. Edison as to whether this energy, once freed, could be projected across the Atlantic in the next great world-war to destroy war stores and human beings in New York, Berlin, or London.

"There is nothing at all impossible in your conjecture. The energy could be turned into electricity and projected not only across the Atlantic, but flung from any part of the world to any other part. Neither the Atlantic nor anything else could interpose an obstacle. *The force residing in such a power is gigantic and illimitable.*"



Thomas A. Edison at work in his laboratory.

Photo. copyright Keystone View Co.

In reply to the question which half the world is asking: "Would the coming of such a force, by reason of its horrible destructiveness, abolish war by frightening mankind out of it?" Mr. Edison, after thinking a moment, said, emphatically:—

"Even without atomic energy war might be made impossible by new poison-gases and aeroplanes of new and powerful types."

A TERRIBLE PREDICTION.

It was at this point that Thomas Alva Edison made what will yet prove to be the

most historic and terrible prediction that has ever been uttered by the lips of a human being. It having come to my knowledge that in the latest experiments upon a development of Lewisite, the world's most deadly poison-gas, both the Germans and the Japanese had made extraordinary progress, I asked Mr. Edison the following series of questions :—

(1) Had he or any other inventor discovered any effective counter to the aeroplane ?

(2) Was it a fact that anything from twenty-five to fifty modern 'planes loaded with the new poison-gas would be able without effective interference to fly over London or New York ?

(3) Whether, if this were possible, the dropping of the new gas could kill by suffocation some millions of people without gas-mask or other preventive being able to stop it ?

Edison, in his matter-of-fact way, which always carries conviction, answered these questions seriatim, but with a kind of deadly certainty which left no room for doubt.

" Neither I nor anybody else, so far as I know, has discovered any counter to the aeroplane, even in its present stage. There is nothing to prevent a flotilla of 'planes flying to-morrow over London and spraying London's millions with a gas which can suffocate those millions within a comparatively short time. Twenty to fifty 'planes should be quite sufficient for such work."

" I have been told that practically every man, woman, and child in London, for example, could be suffocated to death by such a gas within twelve hours. Is that possible ? Is it true ? "

LONDON CAN BE POISONED IN THREE HOURS.

Edison smiled quietly. " It is *not* true," he said. " *It could be done in the space of three hours !* "

If this be true, and Edison's obvious belief that no effective counter to " the flying death "—that is, to the aeroplane—was likely to be discovered in our day, it means that the next war will no longer be the affair of millions locked in a death struggle over a period of years, but just an affair of twenty-four hours, in which time those millions will have met their deaths. It is to this that modern war is coming. In a word, it may quite conceivably mean that the White Civilization which it has taken the centuries to build will be poisoned in a night. No other conclusion is possible.

To come from the things of death to the things of life beyond death has been the concern of the world's greatest inventor within recent times. For many millions his researches in this field, upon strictly scientific lines, will prove the most fascinating.

The world heard some time ago that Edison was at work upon what the world called " a spirit-finder," that is to say, a machine or apparatus so delicately adjusted, so susceptible to the minutest vibration, that if such things as spirits might be supposed to exist, and really desired to communicate with the living, they (the spirits) would find to their hands, or voices, " an apparatus which would give them a better chance of expressing themselves than the modern crude methods of tilting tables and ouija boards." The words in quotation marks were Mr. Edison's own. He sternly repudiates the attempt so speciously made to father upon him a belief in spirits, as also to make it seem that he was a convert to spiritualism.

" The thing which first struck me," said Mr. Edison, " was the absurdity of expecting ' spirits ' to waste their time operating such cumbrous, unscientific media as tables, chairs, and the ouija board with its letters. My convinced belief is merely that if ever the question of life after death, or psychic phenomena generally, is to be solved, it will have to be put on a scientific basis, as chemistry is put, and withdrawn from the hands of the charlatan and the ' medium.'

" My business has been, and is, to give the scientific investigator—or, for that matter, the unscientific—an apparatus which, like the compass of the seaman, will put their investigations upon a scientific basis. This apparatus may perhaps most readily be described as a sort of valve. In exactly the same way as a megaphone increases many times the volume and carrying power of the human voice, so with my ' valve,' whatever original force is used upon it is increased enormously for purposes of registration of the phenomena behind it. It is exactly on the lines of the tiny valve which in a modern power-house can be operated by the finger of a man and so release a hundred thousand horse-power.

" Now, I don't make any claims whatever to prove that the human personality survives what we call ' death.' All I claim is that any effort caught by my apparatus will be magnified many times, and it does not matter how slight is the effort, it will be sufficient to record whatever there is to be recorded.

MACHINE TO DECIDE LIFE AFTER DEATH.

" This will settle once and for all the claims of modern psychic investigators like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and others to have definitely effected communication with a world beyond the grave.

"Frankly, I do not accept the present theories about life and death. I believe, rightly or wrongly, that life is indestructible, it is true, and I also believe that there has always been a fixed quantity of life on this planet, and that this quantity can neither be increased nor decreased. But that does not mean that I believe the survival of personality has been proved—as yet. Perhaps it may be one day. Perhaps some apparatus upon the lines of my 'valve' may prove it, but that day is not yet, nor have I as yet secured any results to definitely prove such survival.

"When I wrote my original article upon my apparatus, and the object for which it was made, there went out to the world the entirely inaccurate idea that I had invented a 'spirit-finder.' The fact is that it is almost impossible to get people to understand, however plainly you put anything."

"Then what is your conception of life, Mr. Edison?" I asked.

"What I believe is that our bodies are made up of myriads of units of life. Our body is not itself *the* unit of life or *a* unit of life. It is the tiny entities which may be the cells that are the units of life. Let me give you, as an example, the famous flier, the steamship *Mauretania*.

"The *Mauretania* is not herself a living thing—it is the men in her that are alive. If she is wrecked on the coast, for instance, the men get out, and when the men get out it simply means that the 'life-units' leave the ship, but they are not dead yet. And so in the same way a man is not 'dead' because his body is buried and the vital principle—that is, the 'life-units'—has left the body.

"Everything that pertains to life is still living, and cannot be destroyed. Everything that pertains to life is still subject to the laws of animal life. We have myriads of cells, and it is the inhabitants in these cells, inhabitants which themselves are beyond the limits of the microscope, which vitalize and 'run' our body.

"The point is that the men who were in the *Mauretania* still live, but they don't live in the *Mauretania*.

"To put it in another way, I believe that these life-units of which I have spoken band themselves together in countless millions and billions in order to make a man. We have too facilely assumed that each one of us is himself a unit, just as we have assumed that the horse or dog is each a unit of life. This, I am convinced, is wrong thinking. The fact is that these 'life-units' are too tiny to be seen even by the most high-powered microscope, and so we have assumed that the unit is the man which we can see, and have ignored the existence of the real life-units, which are those we cannot see."

Edison celebrates his seventy-fifth birthday by punching the time-clock as usual in his works at West Orange, N.J.

Photo. copyright Keystone View Co.

I ventured here to ask how it was that such infinitesimal entities could carry on the tremendous and varied work of, for example, the human body.

"There is nothing to prevent it," the great inventor said, with assuredness, "for

I have had the calculations made, and the theory of the electron is, in my view, satisfactory, and makes it quite possible to have a highly organized and developed entity like the human body made up of myriads of electrons, themselves invisible.

MICROBES THAT HAVE MEMORY.

"Further, I believe that these life-units themselves possess memory. If a man burns his hand, the skin will grow in exactly the same pattern again, and with the same lines as the hand originally had before the accident. Now, it would be quite impossible for those hundreds of fine lines to be meticulously reproduced if there were no memory for detail behind the rebuilding of them. The skin does not grow that way and in exactly the same pattern again 'by chance.' There *is* no chance."

"But are all these life-units, or entities, possessed of the same memory, or are some, so to speak, the builders' labourers, and are others the units which direct those labourers?"

"It may be that the great mass of them are workers and a tiny minority directors of the work. That is not a matter about which we can speak with any certainty.

"But what one can say with some assurance is that these entities cannot be destroyed, and that there is a fixed number of them. They may assemble and reassemble in a thousand different forms from a starfish to a man, but they are the same entities.

"No man today can set the line as to where 'life' begins and ends. Even in the formation of crystals we see a definite ordered plan at work. Certain solutions will always form a particular kind of crystal, without variation. It is not impossible that these life-entities are at work in the mineral and plant, as in what we call the 'animal' world."

Thomas A. Edison's home.
Photo. Byron

DOES MAN SURVIVE?

The question I then put to Edison was, What, in his view, was the supreme problem in connection with these entities and the problem of life after death?

"The thing that really matters is what happens to what one may call the 'master' entities—those that direct the others. Eighty-two remarkable operations upon the brain have definitely proved that the seat of our personality lies in that part of the brain known as the fold of Broca. It is not unreasonable to suppose that these entities which direct reside within this fold. The supreme problem is what becomes of these master entities after what we call death, when they leave the body.

"The point is whether these directing entities remain together after the death of the body in which they have been residing, or whether they go about the universe after breaking up. If they break up and no longer remain as an *ensemble*, then it looks to me that our personality does not survive death—that is, we do not survive death as individuals."

The final question I put to Mr. Edison was, "Then, if these life-units or entities break up, as you suggest, what becomes of the theory of eternal life?"

"If they do break up and do not remain together after the death of the body, then that would mean that the eternal life which so many of us earnestly desire would not be the eternal life and persistence of the individual, as individual, but would be an impersonal eternal life—for, whatever happens to the life-units, or whatever forms they may assume, it is at least assured that they themselves live for ever.

"I do hope myself that personality survives and that we persist. If we do persist upon the other side of the grave, then my apparatus, with its extraordinary delicacy, should one day give us the proof of that persistence, and so of our own eternal life."

The great Edison has, we all hope, many years of life before him in which to accomplish his latest, and what to many will seem his most vital, task—the solution of the greatest problem in the world—whether man lives for ever.

THE SINISTER QUEST OF NORMAN GREYES

by

E·PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES CROMBIE

No. 9.—MICHAEL'S WEDDING GIFT.

By MICHAEL.

FOR many months after my somewhat ingenious escape from the *café* of Mme. Ponadour in the Maritime Quartier of Marseilles, I lived in the Forêt du Dom, on the far side of Hyères, the life of a dog. There were three of us woodmen in the hut—Pierre, Jacques, and myself. My two unchosen companions, after twenty years of the same monotonous labour, had grown very much like the trees whose branches we lopped off and whose trunks we hauled down the road to the mountainous stack whence they were fetched by motor-lorry from Nice. These two men, so far as I was able to discover, possessed no virtues. They cheated at cards—we had one filthy pack which had lasted them for a year before I came—they drank to excess when they could afford the wine or the fiery brandy of the country, and I am convinced that they would have murdered anyone for a few francs, if they could have been sure of evading detection. Their complexions were, as mine soon became, almost black. They were clods of the earth, men ageless and passionless except when the wine was in their blood, from whom I hid, at the same time and with equal discretion, my thoughts and my purse.

I grew to look upon my queer fancy for them as a phase of weakness, a sign of the marching of the years. For I was under no misapprehension concerning myself and my position in the world. Sometimes, whilst the others slept, I read the newspapers, which we obtained with difficulty from the neighbouring village; read of myself as the most notorious criminal at large; read of all the world-famed detectives of London, Paris, and New York, who had sworn to effect my capture; read of my crimes, my daring, my cunning; read of all these things outside my shanty on the hillside—and smiled. Given a certain amount of resignation and patience, and I knew very well that I was safe as long as I chose. There, however, was the trouble. Corduroy trousers and a woodman's smock were not to my fancy as articles of dress. Nor did I care about dark bread and soup, apples and sour wine, as a means of keeping body and soul together. There was money for me in London, plenty of it. I knew that to reach that money I should, before long, come out into the open and challenge once more the world of my enemies.

One day a chance incident set me thinking. We had paused for a second to fill our pipes with filthy tobacco, barely a dozen yards round one of the hairpin corners of the forest road, leaving our wagons, as usual, in the middle of the thoroughfare. Suddenly a car swung round the corner, travelling too fast for the driver to apply his brakes with safety. With great skill he passed us, grazing the long trunks of the lopped trees, and escaping the precipice by a matter of inches. The chauffeur drove on, turning round for a moment, however, to shake his fist and shout abuse at us. I waved my hand in friendly fashion, for the incident had given me an idea. That night I saw that Pierre and Jacques drank more than their usual share of the sour wine, and afterwards I propounded my scheme.

"Comrades," I said, "it is a dog's life we lead."

They growled assent.

"To-day," I continued, "an idea came to me. If our wagons had been an inch or two nearer the outside corner of the road, or the

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man in the car a shade less skilful, he could not possibly have escaped. His car would have been smashed, and he would have gone over the edge of the precipice."

The men made strange noises in their throats and continued to listen.

"It is a dog's life, this," I repeated. "What we need, to make things endurable, is money—money, so that you two can go down to the *café* at the foot of the hill and drink brandy with the daughters of the village, they who leave you now so unkindly alone because you have nothing to spend upon them."

Their pipes were out of their mouths now, and they were listening intently.

"A man like that one to-day would have money—a pocket-book. Whilst he was unconscious, look you, we would take it. One of us would bring it up here, here where there are a hundred hiding-places, in the ground, the trees, the cracks of the earth. A pocket-book which is lost, is lost. What do you say, comrades ?"

There was no doubt about how the scheme appealed to them. Jacques was showing all the fangs of his yellow teeth in one tremendous smile. Pierre's round, black eyes were lit with a covetous gleam.

"It would be an equal share between the three ?" he urged.

"Between the three," I agreed. "Leave the details to me."

WE went to our work the next morning with a new zest. All the time that we were at work in the forest, lopping the branches from the fallen trees and piling them on to the wagons, we were thinking of what Fortune might have in store for us on our homeward crawl. When, at last, the time came to start, my two companions seemed more like human beings than at any time I had known them. They marched stolidly but hopefully on by the side of the horses. I, having the better eyesight, watched the winding road, down in the valleys below and up on the hillside. We crawled round each corner, loitering at the psychological spot always with the same evil hope in our hearts. The affair, however, was not so easy. Sometimes we were seen from above or below, sometimes. drivers were too careful. On the fourth day, however, success rewarded our perseverance. A small car which I had spotted from a distance came round the corner where we were, so to speak, anchored, driven with that full measure of recklessness which only a Frenchman, anxious to save his engine, can obtain. There was a wild cry from the driver, a crash into our wagon, and over went the car and man down the side of the precipice. It was an agreeable sight.

It was I who clambered down to where our victim was lying, and drew a pleasing-looking black pocket-book from the inside of his coat. Afterwards I felt his heart and discovered that he was alive. I ordered Pierre to move the wagons over to our own side of the road, and we secreted the pocket-book amongst the timber we were carrying. Then we waited for events, and, although I really cared not in the least whether the man lived or died, I found myself, to my surprise, bathing his head and loosening his clothing. Presently a public touring car from Cannes, on its way to Hyères, arrived. The accident was explained, room was made for the injured man, and a liberal *pourboire* given us, collected amongst the passengers. Afterwards we made our way home, and, later on, when we had lit our evening fire, we opened the pocket-book. There were nine hundred francs there, and I shall never forget the evil faces of my two companions, in the light of the dancing flames, as they leaned over and watched me count the notes. I divided the money into three portions, but I spoke to them as a master.

"Listen, Jacques, and you, Pierre," I said. "I am a man of justice, but, although I am one of you, I have travelled beyond these forests, and I know the world. If you take this money with you to the village to-night, you will be drunk, the truth will be known, and we shall all go to prison. I will swear to you the woodcutter's oath, the oath across the flames, that your share shall be saved. But go to the village to-night with twenty francs each, the *pourboire* given us by the Englishmen, and let me keep the rest for you, or hide it for yourselves."

They had just sufficient wit to realize that I was their superior in intelligence, and that my advice was good. So we growled an oath in the strange dialect of those parts, and I gripped their gnarled and knotted hands, which reminded me always of the roots of the trees we felled. Afterwards, I went down to the village with them, had one drink for good fellowship's sake, and returned to the shanty and solitude, with a bottle of the best brandy and some tobacco. I drank moderately, as I have always done in life, but the brandy was good to my palate, and the tobacco better. I lay at my ease on the outskirts of the clearing, sipped my brandy, and smoked and thought. Dimly though the beauty of my surroundings appealed to me, they filled me with only a negative joy. I thought of the great cities with their thronged thoroughfares, their mighty roar of turbulent life, the crowded parks, the theatres, the opera, with its wonderful music which I had always loved, the voices and laughter and presence of beautiful women. I would win my way back to these yet.

OUR next adventure, engineered in similar fashion to the last, brought us a matter of a couple of thousand francs. This time, however, there was trouble, for the driver's neck was broken as he pitched head foremost from the seat of the car, and his wife, who was only slightly injured, gave vigorous evidence as to the position of our wagon and the disappearance of her husband's pocket-book after we had dragged his body up from a ledge of the precipice. A gendarme from the neighbouring village visited us that same night, and made a careful search through our belongings. There was nothing to be found, however, and by preserving a stolid silence and leaving all speech to me, my companions escaped suspicion just as I did. Afterwards, however, I spoke to them seriously.

"Comrades," I pointed out, "this game is too good to last. For a time we must go warily. Afterwards we will seek one more adventure, which we must select with great care, for it will be my last. If it is successful, I shall leave you. Afterwards, you two had better bury your savings in the ground and abandon the game, for it needs brains to be made successful, and you two have not the brains of a rabbit between you."

They knew that I was right, and they held their peace. After that we let many cars go by. It was a month later, indeed, before we made our last *coup*, and it ended in very different fashion from what I had anticipated. From my look-out place on a stretch of the road above the wagons I saw a grey touring car, piled with luggage and golf clubs, approaching from the direction of Cannes. There was a girl in front, seated by the driver, and an elderly gentleman behind. I called down to the others.

"Comrades, this is our chance," I announced. "Move the wagons on around the corner, and be prepared for what may happen."

What did happen was not in the least what I had expected. A certain phase of it remains entirely inexplicable to me, even to this day. From where I lay, crouching amongst the scrub, I could see that something was wrong with the car, or with the manner in which it was being driven. The chauffeur was rocking in his seat, and the car was swaying from side to side—it seemed at one time, indeed, as though it would go over the precipice without any intervention on our part. But it was the girl's face from which I could not remove my eyes, the girl's face which produced such an amazing impression upon me. She must have fully realized the danger she was in, but she showed not the slightest signs of fear. I heard her speak to the chauffeur, trying to bring him to his senses, but it was obvious that he was either in a fit or had completely lost his nerve. Then she leaned over and tried to put on the foot-brake, succeeding so far, in fact, as to momentarily check the progress of the car. The chauffeur, suddenly seizing his opportunity, jumped from his seat and rolled over in the dust. The girl's foot apparently slipped from the brake, and the car once more gathered speed. She clutched at the wheel, but it was obvious that she had never driven. Somehow or other she got round the corner, but, at the next—the wagons! I saw her eyes, as the car came bumping down the hill, heard the wild shouting and exclamations of the old gentleman behind, and there came to me one of those extraordinary moments, which I make no attempt to explain, moments when action is decided purely by impulse, and by an impulse irreducible to law. We had made the most careful plans to wreck this car. I risked my life to save it. I half-slid, half-scrambled, down the slope into the road, drew in my breath, poised myself for a great effort, and, at the psychological moment, leaped for the splashboard. More or less I succeeded. I found my left hand within reach of the wheel. The girl yielded it as though with instant understanding, and slid away to make room for me. In a matter of seconds I had the wheel in both hands, half-kneeling, half-sitting. We were within two inches of the precipice after my jump, and we just touched the farther side of the road with my grab at the wheel. After that it was easy. I righted the car without much difficulty, applied the brake, gently but with increasing force, took the corner with only a moderate skid, and brought the car to a standstill within a few feet of the wagons. When the girl saw it, the first look of fear crept into her face. She looked at me with shining eyes.

"You were just in time," she said. "That was a wonderful jump."

"What was the matter with your chauffeur?" I asked.

"Our own chauffeur was taken ill, and this was a boy we engaged in Cannes," she answered. "He was not equal to driving the car. He lost his nerve at the top of the hill."

The old gentleman was in the road by this time and gripping my hand.

"My good fellow," he exclaimed, "you have done a great day's work for yourself! For God's sake say that you understand English."

"I have hewn wood in Devonshire," I told him. "I speak English or French, which you will."

He was recovering himself now, and I could see that he was a very pompous person, the very prototype of the travelling Englishman of wealth who believes in himself.

notes. It seemed as though he could not get rid of them fast enough.

"It is agreed," he declared, eagerly. "We shall not quarrel about terms, I promise you!"

I poised myself for a great effort, and leaped for the splashboard.

"My name," he announced, "is Lord Kindersley. You will never regret this day's work."

I made some attempt to descend, but he held me in my place.

"You must drive us to the next town," he insisted, "to Hyères or Toulon. I will reward you handsomely, but we cannot be left here, and I will not let that wretched youth touch the car again."

"Where are you going to?" I inquired.

"England," the girl answered; "to Boulogne."

"I will drive you to Boulogne," I said, "if you will give me that young man's livery and papers, and recompense my comrades there for my absence. They will have to engage another woodman."

The elderly gentleman was spluttering out

A dusty figure came staggering down the hill, a youth sobered by fright, but evidently recovering from a debauch. I wasted few words upon him, but I took him round the bend of the road, stripped him of his clothes, and left him mine. Then I mounted the driving-seat of the car and tested the gears. Pierre and Jacques were gazing with amazement at the little bundle of hundred-franc notes which the English milord had thrust into their hands.

"Farewell, comrades," I said, waving my hand to them. "Some day I may come back, but I think not. Good luck to you both!"

They returned my farewell in wooden fashion. I let in my clutch and glided down the hill. So we started on the way to Boulogne.

During the whole of our four days' journey, the girl, who sat by my side all the time, remained as though wrapped in her thoughts, and spoke to me only after long intervals.

All the time, though, I was conscious of her presence, and I think that she was conscious of mine.

"How is it that you, a woodman, can drive a motor-car?" was her first question.

"I have not always been a woodman," I answered.

"Why did you want that boy's papers?" she asked.

"Because I wished to reach England, and I might find it difficult to get a passport of my own," I admitted.

She abandoned the subject a little reluctantly. I knew very well that she was longing to ask me further questions, but I gave her no encouragement. On the following day, after a prolonged silence, she again adopted an interrogative tone. This time I found it less easy to answer her.

"Why did you risk your life for us?" she asked, with curious abruptness, towards the close of a long day's run.

"Because I admired the way you were

facing what seemed to be certain death," I told her. "The worst of us are liable to an impulse like that."

"Is it true," she went on, "that some of the woodmen of the Forêt du Dom frequently rob travellers who have met with motor accidents?"

"Quite true," I admitted. "They have even been known to contribute to the accidents. I have done it myself."

She shivered.

"I wish you would not tell me those things," she said, reproachfully.

"It is the truth," I assured her. "We rather thought of wrecking your car, but I watched you coming down the hill, and afterwards I only thought of saving you."

She laughed a little nervously, but, for the moment, she avoided meeting my eye.

"You are a strange person," she declared. "Why were you masquerading as a woodman?"

"Because I have wrecked other things besides motor-cars," I answered. "I was hiding from the police. This is a great opportunity for me to break away."

She sighed.

"I am sorry," she confessed. "All the same, I hope that you succeed."

After that she tried once or twice to get me to talk about myself. She even suggested possible excuses for my imaginary misdemeanours. About myself and my doings, however, I maintained a grim silence. In the end she ceased altogether from conversation.

At Boulogne I was entrusted with the car, which I took across to London and delivered according to instructions at the garage of the house in South Audley Street. There I received a message that the young lady, whom I had avoided seeing at Folkestone, wished to speak to me the moment I arrived. I was shown into a little sitting-room in the great house, and she came to me almost at once. The first glimpse I had of her, as she crossed the threshold, gave me almost a shock. This fashionably-dressed young woman, notwithstanding her sweet, almost appealing smile, was a strangely different person from the girl with the wind-blown hair and scornful lips whom I had seen hastening on her way to death.

"My uncle wished me to give you this," she said, handing me an envelope, "and I wondered"—she raised her eyes to mine—"whether you would care to have a little memento of me?"

She gave me a picture of herself in a tortoiseshell frame, and I put it into my pocket with the envelope. She made room for me to sit by her side on the sofa, but I affected not to notice her gesture of invitation. I had suddenly become conscious of a most amazing and unexpected sensation.

"I shall never forget that evening," she continued, softly. "It was a wonderful jump, wasn't it?"

I was the victim of new impulses, bewildering and incomprehensible. They led me in the strangest direction. I wanted to explain to her exactly who I was, to make her realize that I was an outcast for all time. Yet, when I made my effort, I felt that my words were pitiably weak.

"I think, Miss Kindersley," I said, "that you had better forget as much of the whole affair as you can. Remember that I deliberately planned to wreck your car as I had done others. It was only a fancy which made me change my mind. Believe me, I am not a credible acquaintance."

"But you might be," she persisted. "Won't you try?"

I shook my head.

"It is too late," I told her. "I am a hunted man to-day and shall be to the end. There is no country in the world where I could find safety, or even rest, for a little time. And what is coming to me I have earned."

In these chronicles of my life there is just one vice, the vice of cowardice, to which I have never had to plead guilty. Just at this juncture, however, the sight of her small white hand stealing out towards me, the little quiver of her proud lips, perhaps a faint waft of that perfume of which I had been dimly conscious on those four days when she had sat by my side, some one of these things, or all of them together, gripped at my heart, filled me with a vague terror of myself, so that I did the only thing which seemed possible—I hurried out of the room and out of the house.

MR. YOUNGHUSBAND'S face was a picture when I visited him the next morning at his offices in Lincoln's Inn. I was still in my chauffeur's livery, which, with its peaked hat, afforded an excellent disguise, but he recognized my voice at once, and he shook in his chair.

"Surely," he faltered, "this is most unwise?"

"My friend," I answered, seating myself at the other side of the table, "it may be unwise, but it is necessary. I found a perfectly safe means of getting into England, and now that I am here I want money."

He drew his cheque-book from the drawer, but I brushed it on one side.

"I will have a thousand pounds in Bank of England notes," I told him, "and a draft on the Bank of England for the same amount. Send your clerk out for it, then we can talk."

He obeyed me, struggling hard to retain his composure. I watched him with a smile.

"They say that you are a brave man when

I am away," I remarked, "that you never show the least sign of losing your nerve."

"There is no one over here so rash as you," the lawyer replied, promptly. "There is no one else who plays for such big stakes or runs such risks. The others I can deal with. They take my advice, they adopt caution as their motto. When you are in London, I never have a moment free from anxiety."

I shrugged my shoulders.

"I shall not trouble you much longer," I promised. "There is another matter to be cleared up, though. In Marseilles I was told that Janet Soale had drawn a large sum of money from you."

"It is utterly false," the lawyer replied. "She has not even applied for a penny."

I knew the truth then, of course. Louisa was never one to brook a rival. I felt a momentary compunction when I thought of Janet's terror in the *café* at Marseilles. After all, although we had ceased to care for one another, she had been faithful to me after her fashion.

"We heard that you were drowned at Marseilles," my companion remarked.

"It was a narrow escape," I admitted. "Rimmington and Greyes were both over there, and they got on my track through Janet and Louisa. I had luck that night, and I needed it."

Mr. Younghusband moved uneasily in his chair.

"You were mad to come to London," he declared.

"A species of desperation," I answered, calmly. "If you had eaten nothing but black bread and soup, and drunk nothing but sour wine for several months, you would be inclined to run a little risk yourself for the sake of a dinner at the Café Royal."

"Why don't you retire?" the lawyer suggested, leaning across the table. "You have sufficient money, and you are fond of the country. Why not make full use of your wonderful genius for disguise, choose some quiet spot, and run no more risks?"

"The matter is worth considering," I admitted. "There are a few little affairs to straighten out first, though."

Mr. Younghusband looked at me curiously, then he laid his forefinger upon the copy of the *Times* which he had been studying when I entered the office.

"You are interested in to-morrow's event, I suppose?"

"What event?" I inquired.

The lawyer shrugged his shoulders. I could see quite well that he did not believe in my ignorance.

"The marriage of your old friend, Norman Greyes."

I stared across the table, incredulously.

"I have, indeed, been living out of the world," I observed. "Whom is he marrying?"

Mr. Younghusband coughed. He was watching me closely and he was almost embarrassed.

"Do you mean to tell me that you do not know?" he demanded.

"Of course I don't," I replied, a little irritably. "You seem to forget where I have been for the last four months."

"Norman Greyes is marrying the lady whom I have met as Mrs. Stanfield. She calls herself now Mrs. Janet Soale."

That was, undoubtedly, one of the shocks of my life. Janet and I were parted, I had deceived her as I had done many other women, and, in her day, she had served me well and faithfully. I had no ill-feeling against her, especially now that I realized she had left my money untouched. More than ever, however, I meant to kill Norman Greyes. I held out my hand for the *Times* and read the little announcement.

"Good!" I said. "I shall attend the reception which I see is being given after the ceremony. It will be interesting to see Norman Greyes' taste in pearls. I see that he is having his collection strung as a wedding present for his wife."

"If you do, you're a madman," the lawyer declared angrily.

"Madmen for luck," I replied.

By JANET.

IT was exactly two months after I had left Marseilles when Norman Greyes walked into my little sitting-room in Smith Street, Westminster, where I was busy typing a play for the agency which occasionally sent me work. He was gaunt and thin, and it was obvious that he had not wholly recovered his strength, but he showed every sign of his old promptitude and decision of character. Before I had got over my surprise at his coming, I felt his arms around me and every atom of strength leaving my body. The most wonderful moment of my life had arrived!

"When will you marry me, Janet?" he asked, a little later on, when he had set me back in my chair and seated himself by my side.

"Marry you?" I gasped. "How can you talk of such things!"

"Simply because they have to be talked about before they can be undertaken," he replied. "I look upon you as Michael's widow, but you have never cared for him as you are going to care for me."

"But you don't even know if Michael is dead," I protested, my heart beating fast, every fibre of my body quivering at the thoughts evoked by his words.

The lawyer shrugged his shoulders. I could see quite well that he did not believe in my ignorance.

Norman held my hand tightly.

"We are very sensible people, you and I," he said, "and we are going to look stark facts in the face. It doesn't matter in the least legally whether Michael is dead or not. He had at least two other wives alive in America when he married you."

I leaned towards him. Somehow or other, what would have seemed in my saner moments a sheer impossibility, seemed, at that moment, a perfectly natural and reasonable thing. Then, suddenly the old horror rose up in my mind.

"You forget," I told him—"you forget that I, too——"

He placed his hand gently over my lips.

"Janet," he interrupted, "nothing that either of us could do, no penance we could undertake, would bring Ladbroke back to life. His widow has her pension—I have seen to that. For the rest, you must forget as I have forgotten."

"I killed him, Norman," I faltered.

"I have killed men myself in my day," he replied, "and I shall probably kill Michael, if he is still alive, before our

accounts are finally settled. That affair does not concern us any longer. You acted on a momentary impulse. You were protecting the man whom you fancied, at that time, you cared for."

"I was doing more than that," I told him. "I was avenging myself. I was a stupid girl in those days—but I had ideas. No man had ever kissed me upon the lips. He took me unawares. If I had had the weapon in my hand then, I should have killed him without any other thought."

I saw a look almost of content in the face of the man I loved.

"I always guessed that there was something of the sort," he said. "The immediate question is, when are you going to marry me?"

I SUPPOSE I was weak, but all women are weak when the man they care for pleads.

I had been through years of misery, and the time came when I was simply incapable of any further resistance. I became entirely passive, I did exactly as I was told, and marvellously happy I was in doing it. Just as I was, in my shabby clothes, we went out to a restaurant in Soho and dined. It was a queer little place, over-crowded and not too well ventilated, but to me it was like a room in a palace. All the time we made plans, or rather he made plans and I listened. My long struggle was at an end. We were to be married almost at once, to travel for a time in Italy, Egypt—all the places I had longed to visit—and afterwards to settle down in the country and forget. It was not until after Norman had left me in my rooms, and the joy of the evening was merged into memories, that I felt that chill sense of apprehension which I did not altogether lose until long afterwards. A sudden fear of Michael set me shivering. I could not believe that he was dead. I felt, somehow, that he would come back and stand between me and my new happiness. The fear became almost a paroxysm. I locked the door of my room and lay awake most of the night, terrified of the sound of a passing footstep, terrified when a taxi-cab stopped anywhere near, fearful even of the darkness of the room, out of the shadows of which I fancied that I could see Michael's cold, ageless face, with his strange smile and grey-green eyes, behind which lurked that curious sense of power. The night passed, but even during those wonderful days that followed the fear remained. It came back even at the moment of my supreme happiness, some weeks later, when I passed down the aisle of the church with Norman—his wife! I suddenly felt convinced that Michael was in the church. It was a terrible moment, although a brief one. I faltered, and Norman looked down at me anxiously. Then I laughed and pretended to gather up my train. It was nothing, I told him—just a shiver.

The rest, for some time, was just a dream. There were crowds of people at the house in Southwell Gardens where Norman's sister was giving a reception for us. Everybody was wonderfully nice to me, and I made new friends at every moment. Just as I was warned that it was time for me to go and change into my travelling gown, an uncle of Norman's, a Mr. Harold Greyes, asked me to show him the pearl necklace which had been Norman's present to me. I took him at once into the little room where the wedding gifts were set out. There was a small gathering of guests there, nearly all of whom were known to me. At the far end of the room, seated in a chair and apparently taking little interest in the proceedings, was the detective who had come from Scotland Yard to watch over the jewellery.

"I know that you have only a moment to spare," Mr. Greyes said to me. "I will just look at the pearls and be off. I am curious to see if Norman is really a judge."

I pointed to where the necklace was lying in its case. I myself was talking to one or two people who had finished their inspection. My companion glanced downwards, frowned, adjusted his eyeglass, dropped it, and turned to me with a little smile.

"Quite a reasonable precaution," he observed; "but was it necessary with a detective in the room?"

"I don't understand," I told him, a little bewildered.

"The substitution of the necklace," he explained. "Of course, these are very fair imitations, but I wanted to see the real thing."

I leaned down and felt a sudden thrill of apprehension. The necklace which was twined around its setting of ivory satin was one which I had never seen before. It was certainly not the one which I had taken in my fingers and showed to some friends of Norman's, less than half an hour ago.

I called to the detective.

"My pearl necklace has been taken within the last half an hour," I exclaimed. "This is an imitation one which has been substituted!"

The detective first closed the door and then came back into the room. We both of us looked around. Besides myself and my companion, Mr. Harold Greyes, there were

present a very charming girl called Beatrice Kindersley, a great friend of Norman's; an elderly lady, Mrs. Phillipson; and a slim, soldierly-looking man who was a complete stranger to me, but who, on account of his sunburnt complexion, I put down as an Anglo-Indian.

"Dear me," the latter exclaimed, "this is very distressing! A great many people have passed in and out during the last half hour."

"It is only within the last three minutes," the detective said, "that I have moved to the farther end of the room. May I ask, Lady Greyes, if everyone here is known to you?"

"Miss Kindersley, certainly," I replied, "and Mrs. Phillipson. I don't think I have met you, have I?" I added, turning to the man.

He looked at me with a rather peculiar smile, and I noticed for the first time that he was wearing rimless spectacles. He had a particularly high forehead and thick, grey-black hair brushed smoothly back. I cannot say that he reminded me of anyone, yet something in his appearance filled me with a vague sense of uneasiness.

"I fear that I have not yet had that honour, Lady Greyes," he acknowledged, quietly. "Your husband, however, is an old friend. My name is Escombe—Colonel James Escombe of the Indian Army."

"If you are unknown to Lady Greyes, I must ask you to remain until Sir Norman arrives," the detective said.

"With the utmost pleasure," he replied. "I have already had the privilege of renewing my acquaintance with him."

Beatrice Kindersley, who had been standing looking on, suddenly began to laugh.

"Poor Colonel Escombe!" she exclaimed, passing her arm through his. "Why, he is one of Dad's oldest friends. He hates weddings and functions of all sorts, but I persuaded him to come here with me because he had met Sir Norman in India once. Please, Lady Greyes, may I take him away? We promised to call for Dad at his club, and we are late already."

The detective was obviously disappointed. I murmured something conventional and shook hands with them both.

"I may be permitted, although a comparative stranger," Colonel Escombe said as he bent over my fingers, "to wish you all the happiness which I am sure you deserve."

They passed out, without any undue haste, laughing and talking to one another. The detective hurried away, on the track of some fresh inquiry. I moved back, urged by some irresistible impulse, to the case where the imitation pearl necklace was lying. For the first time I noticed a little label attached to it. I turned it over and read two words, written in a familiar handwriting—"Michael's Gift."

SUDDENLY Norman came hurrying in, already changed into a grey tweed travelling suit. He thrust his arm through mine and swung me towards the door.

"Janet, dear," he said, "you have exactly a quarter of an hour."

"One question, please," I begged. "Did you ever know a Colonel Escombe in the Indian Army?"

"Never in my life," he answered.

I saw the detective hurrying towards us, and I clutched Norman's arm. I think that he must have guessed from my face that something had happened.

"No-man," I whispered, "supposing the necklace——"

"Well, dear?"

"Supposing it was stolen?"

His grasp on my arm tightened.

"I shouldn't care a hang, sweetheart," he whispered, "so long as we catch that train in half an hour and I have you all to myself for the rest of my life."

By MICHAEL.

THE greatest genius in the world cannot foresee all contingencies. It has always been my practice to leave something to fate. How on earth I was going to get out of the house in Southwell Gardens, if the theft of the necklace were discovered before I could get away by natural means, I had been quite unable to make up my mind. Fate, however, decided it for me. I left with flying colours, rescued by the girl whose lips had mocked at danger on the precipices of the Forêt du Dom.

"Where to?" she asked, as we took our places in her car.

"To the British Museum Tube, if you can take me so far," I answered.

She gave the order to the chauffeur. Then she leaned back in her place. Her expression puzzled me. She was as pale as she had been on the day when she had faced death, but there was none of the exaltation in her face.

"You are disturbed?" I ventured.

"I am unhappy," she answered.

"You regret your intervention?"

She shook her head.

"It is not that. You stole the pearls?"

"Of course I did," I admitted.

"You are a thief!"

"I never pretended otherwise."

Her eyes filled with tears.

"I will give you that credit," she confessed bravely. "Can I—would it be

possible for me to buy the pearls from you ? "

" For what purpose ? " I inquired.

"To return to Lady Greyes, of course. Don't you see that I am partly responsible for their loss ? "

"My dear young lady," I said, earnestly, " the pearls are yours, with pleasure. I took them because the dramatic side of the theft appealed to me. Norman Greyes and I are old enemies. He has hunted me as only man can hunt man. His wife is an old acquaintance. It flattered my vanity to attend his reception unrecognized, and to help myself to his wife's pearls. Allow me."

I took off my silk hat and laid it upon the opposite seat. Then I passed my hand slowly from my forehead back over my hair, pressed the top of my skull, and handed her the necklace. She had been on the point of tears a moment before. She looked at me now, her eyes wide open with wonder.

" I appreciate your surprise," I told her. "As a matter of fact, this false top to my head is one of the most ingenious things my friends in Paris ever made for me. If Norman Greyes succeeds and I fail, you will probably see it one day in the Museum at Scotland Yard."

The car pulled up outside the Tube station. The girl held out her hand. She looked at me, and something of the feeling came into my heart which had driven me, a fugitive, from her house.

" I think that you are a very terrible, but a very wonderful, person," she said. " Anyhow, I like to think that I have paid a part of my debt."

The madness had me in its grip. I lifted her fingers to my lips. I laughed in my soul because she made no effort to withdraw them.

" The whole of it is paid," I told her, as I turned away.

Next month :—

" The Mystery Advertisement."

I read two words, written in a familiar handwriting— " Michael's Gift."

"E. & O.E."

by

ELIOT CRAWSHAY-WILLIAMS

Mr. Crawshay-Williams has specially written for THE STRAND MAGAZINE the following short story version of his play "E. & O.E.," one of the most successful of the Grand Guignol series at the Little Theatre. The story is here illustrated by photographs of the stage production. The title, of course, is the usual business abbreviation of the phrase "Errors and Omissions Excepted."

(1)

A LITTLE black note-book—the kind you buy for a penny or two to keep your petty-cash account in or as an auxiliary washing-list. On the outside is gummed a slip of white paper inscribed, in a tiny hand, "E. & O." A man's fingers turn the pages quickly. We can see the numerous entries of an account; but the action is too rapid to allow us to read any individual entry. Never mind: we shall know all about it later.

(2)

JAMES SMITH was a man of method. His whole life was a method. One is sure he had been born methodically, on the appointed day, of the appropriate weight. Even his name was a very method of a name: average, steady, unremarkable.

Only once had he lapsed from his sure and patient progress through life. Love, that arch-rebel, had lured him into marrying a totally unsuitable little blonde from Surbiton, who, after a year or so of married infelicity, had produced a son, and then quietly done the best thing for the general good by dying.

After that, no more love for James Smith. Too dangerous. With calmness and calculation he chose Mary Mackintosh, who seemed an eminently desirable mate, and prepared to resume his steady pace along life's path. But he left one thing out of his calculations. He left Mary's mother out.

Jane Mackintosh was a managing woman. Probably she had managed the marriage. Without doubt, after it, she managed the husband. After an effort at self-assertion, James retired. He could not have liberty and peace. He chose peace. Mary had a pleasant time in her own way, which was not often James's way, and James normally retired to a small den he had been able to preserve in the highlands of his house, and there passed quiet, not to say dull, hours, unclouded save for tobacco smoke. Also, occasionally, he would get out and pore over a little black note-book. Marked "E. & O."

He had consulted it on the morning we met him. It was his hand that we saw rapidly—yet almost lovingly—turning its pages. Eventually it stopped at a blank page, took a pen, and made an entry.

James had been upset that morning. There had been a scene. Quite a minor scene, about mushrooms considered as a breakfast dish. But a fresh little affair, ending in James's exit, unbreakfasted, upstairs. To make his entry—in the black note-book.

As he walked to the station to catch the usual business train James was preoccupied, and the ignominious unhappiness of his position rankled in his brain. Was there no escape, he turbulently wondered as he stepped off the pavement to cross the road. Was there no esc—— And then there was a blinding blank.

(3)

"MARY!" shouted Mrs. Mackintosh over the banisters, "*Mary*. There's someone at the door. Where's Ann?"

Mary, emerging from the lower regions, thought it pardonable at that hour of the morning to go to the door herself, instead

of hunting up the servant. She opened the door and then——

"Mother! *Mother!*" she screamed. "It's James. He's dead! Oh, he's dead!"

"Hush, mum," said one of the men who carried the stretcher. "'E ain't dead. But 'e's badly 'urt. 'E asked to be brought 'ome 'ere."

They took him upstairs and put him to bed. The doctor took a grave view. Even Mrs. Mackintosh was subdued—for the moment. Death seemed very near. The bus had badly crumpled him up. The back wheel had jumped his head, or it would have been the mortuary for James. As it was——

As soon as he could speak, he asked the women to send for his solicitor.

"I want to make my will," he whispered.

Outside Jane turned to Mary.

"His will?" she said, with hushed ferocity. "His will? Hasn't he made his will? How will it go if—if he dies before ——" she tailed off in horror.

"Oh, I don't know," answered the daughter. "Poor James! Let's send for the man, anyhow."

"Ann!" (*crescendo*, with the soft pedal down) "Ann!"

"Yes, mum?"

"Go to the offices of Stone, Paving, and Stone, and fetch Mr. Stone here *at once*. Go in a taxi. Here's the money."

The two women returned to the sick room and sat in silent expectancy. The dying man lay inert. Except for a slight movement from time to time, or a faint groan, he might have been already dead.

Presently Jane could keep silence no longer. She began to talk to her daughter in an undertone.

"Over his head, you said?"

"Right over his head—there must have been a stone or something to make it jump. If it hadn't been for that——" and Mary paused, unable to face the visualization.

Her mother faced it. "He'd never have been able to settle his affairs before he died." Then she went on with accusing gravity. "My dear, it was criminally negligent of him not to have made his will before. That's the worst of these men of business—they never attend to their own. *Who* will his money go to if——"

Mary broke in, to her credit, a little impatiently.

"Oh, mother, do be quiet," she whispered. "It's too awful. I don't like to think——"

"Think!" interrupted Jane. "*Think!* My dear, we *must* think, and he ought to have thought. I believe the property goes to that scapegrace son of his. And when you married James it was distinctly understood that his son was to be considered as dead as his first wife. Oh!" she gathered indignation. "It's disgraceful!"

"Hush, mother; please, please," and Mary tried to turn the current of the hard old woman's thoughts. "Isn't it time for his morphia?"

"Not quite." Then, with harsh impatience, "I wish this man would come. Still, when he does it won't take long. James need only say 'I leave all to my wife.'"

Jane went over to Charles, whom she addressed in low, quick tones: "We've been cheated; all of us. It's not fair; it's not right."

There was a faint groan from the bed. Jane leapt up, panic in her face. Mary came to her side. James laboriously turned himself over and raised himself a little on his elbow. His white face, white bandages, and the white linen he was lying in made a *macabre* picture.

He began to speak in a faint voice.

"Jane," he said, "and you, Mary, there's something I want to say to you before that solicitor man comes. I remember now, my old friend Stone is away, and it will be his partner, young Stone, his cousin, who will come. I don't know him well, and I have some things to say I wouldn't care for him to hear." Mrs. Mackintosh was all attention. All attentiveness, too. She bent over him with solicitude.

"Now, James," she said in the silkiest voice she was capable of, "you *must not* excite yourself. Let me give you your morphia."

Even in his dying state James found himself able to summon up a feeble irritation.

"No, no; I don't want to be bothered with that infernal needle till I've said what I want to," he croaked. "Please sit down." They sat down.

"It is about this will," he went on; and the women tried to combine expectancy with conventional embarrassment.

"I dare say you'll have thought it very negligent of me not to have made a fresh will on my second marriage."

Jane certainly did think it negligent; but at this juncture she considered it better to disguise her feelings, so she merely tried to reassure her son-in-law.

"You know you are not going to die at all," she told him, cheerily.

James was definite. "I *am* going to die," he persevered. "Very soon. In a few hours. That is why I want to say what I'm going to.

"Well," went on James, "it wasn't just negligence. I knew quite well that my marriage invalidated any previous will, and I had a reason for postponing making another one. And I had no reason to think that I'd die. I'm just over fifty, and I'm a pretty healthy person. I couldn't foresee this." He stopped, and his eyes, for a moment, took a faraway look. Then he pulled himself together and went on: "Yes, I had a reason for not making another will at once. I wanted to be sure I was going to make it right."

AT this Jane gave a little start and was about to say something, but deciding not to, she repressed herself.

"You both know," he went on, "that I had resolved to disinherit my son, John, and before I married you, Mary, I did actually make a will disinheriting him, and leaving my property to my brother and my first wife's brother." Jane nodded. "That will became void on my second marriage. My property then would have gone practically all to John, if I didn't make another will." He paused a moment, then added: "But I still considered John disinherited. I considered Mary, my new wife, my natural heir."

"Of course," observed Jane, brightly.

"Yes, of course, but I thought it well, before I actually made her my legal heir, that she should justify her title. So I made a rough valuation of all I owned. I credited it to you, Mary. John was to have nothing."

"It was understood——" put in Jane.

James interrupted her curtly. "I am not talking about what was understood. People understand odd things."

Jane was shut up and James proceeded. "I valued my property. I credited it to Mary. And then I started a system which I believe I can claim the credit of inventing."

The others pricked up their ears. James thought a moment. Then he resumed: "I want to speak plainly. One of the few privileges of being on one's death-bed is that one can speak plainly. I suppose that indicates that one doesn't believe very strongly in another world—but we won't pursue that. Anyway, I feel I can say now what I've been keeping shut up inside me for a good many years. I hate rows, and rather than have rows I've been silent."

This was too much for Jane, and she burst forth with mingled protestation and regression: "Rows!"

James was not to be irritated, and went on with placidity: "My dear Jane, I know your temperament—and Mary's. I don't mean that you'd have thrown the crockery at me; that is the privilege of the lower classes. But my life would have been lived in a state of—well, let us say strain. I don't like strain. I'm one of those people who, as the saying goes, will do anything for a quiet life."

This time it was Mary who was roused, and in a shocked voice she began: "I am sure——"

James cut her short. "Look here, Mary, let's have it granted that you've been a most efficient wife, and leave it at that. I'm dying, and I can't stand strain now, anyhow. And I've got a good deal to say."

Mary subsided and James passed his hand over his forehead. "Well," he went on, wearily, "where had we got to? Oh, yes; I credited the value of my property to you; and then I started my system. I said nothing about it for the sake of peace and quiet. I got peace and quiet—I allow that. But I didn't have a jolly life."

He turned laboriously to Jane. "You'll pardon me," he said in a tone of apology, "if I am quite frank. You, Jane, you know you weren't," he hesitated for a word, "congenial to me."

Jane was ruffled. "If you'd ever said anything to me, I'd never have come near you."

"I think you would. You're that sort. You hadn't a husband, and you hadn't money, and you have the hell of a will; you'll pardon me, I hope, if I put things crisply." He smiled faintly. "I'm dying, you know. You'd have got what you wanted—maybe after a struggle. And I didn't want a struggle."

Jane, woman of business, wanted to get the gist of it, and put in, somewhat brusquely: "Well, James, what does it all amount to?"

"It amounts to this, Jane," he answered, smoothly. "That I have charged you board and lodging."

The women were staggered. "What!" at last ejaculated Jane.

James was smoothly explanatory. "Board and lodging," he reiterated. "As a paying guest. You see, you weren't my guest; and I didn't see why I should entertain my wife's family at the expense of my own, as it were. So I charged board and lodging to the Mackintosh account—the mother-in-law account I call it," he added, with a little smile. Then he went on explanatorily: "Quite moderate, I can assure you."

The women sat speechless, and it was James who broke the silence by saying to Mary:—

"In the wardrobe, over there, you'll find a little black book—a note-book. It's marked 'E. & O.' Would you mind giving it to me—it's in the pocket of my morning coat."

Jane recovered speech. "E. & O.?" she ejaculated in angry interrogation.

"Errors and Omissions," supplied James, smoothly. Then added: "Rather a feeble little joke, perhaps, but I had to call the book something."

By this time Mary had fetched the book. She gave it to James and sat down again in silence.

James turned over a few leaves. "Ah, here we are," and he read out:—

"'To fifteen years and nine months' board and lodging at five guineas a week!' —that includes wine, Jane, and you always liked my taste in wine—'four thousand guineas.'"

Jane started; and James went on to elucidate.

"You see really it would come to four thousand two hundred and ninety-nine and three-quarter guineas; but I've knocked off the odd amount. In pounds it's four thousand two hundred. You'll forgive my making it clear; but I remember guineas always bothered you both rather. You don't think it's unreasonable, do you? Five guineas! and the port was always vintage."

"I—I think it's unheard-of," Jane managed eventually to get out in a slightly stifled voice.

"Yes," went on James, pleasantly, "I said I thought I had invented the system, didn't I? But the tariff, I mean. It's really quite moderate."

Mary at last found speech. An almost tearful speech.

"Well, I must say I think it's most—most mean of you to have behaved like this. To penalize me because poor mother lived with me to make me happy."

"And me unhappy—you knew that."

Mary swept on, unnoticing. "It's disgusting! Not that I care about these sordid money matters." And then, belying her words, "So you've fined me four thousand pounds in your will?"

"Four thousand two hundred," corrected James urbanely. "And they're not fines. They're board and lodging. I haven't come to the fines yet."

"Fines!" ejaculated Mary.

"Yes. Part of my system. Part I am sorry to have to come to; but you might think me unjust if I didn't explain."

"Fines?" ejaculated Jane.

This time James was curt. "Yes; fines. For bad behaviour."

Mary turned to him indignantly. "Bad behaviour?"

"Bad temper; inconsiderateness; neglect; and—I fear—a certain amount of infidelity."

This, I fear, must have gone home to Mary, for the tone in which she said "Infidelity! Oh, James!" was more disconcerted than amazed.

"Oh," went on James easily, "don't imagine I'm charging you with adultery."

Mary shuddered, and her mother half rose in her seat, to sink back again on finding no words adequate.

"Oh, it's no time for being mealy-mouthed. I mean adultery, and I say adultery. I don't charge you with adultery. You may be guilty of it." Mary shuddered again. "Or you may not. I haven't had a detective on you; I'm not so crude. And in any case I'm not the sort of fool who wants to advertise by a divorce case that he can't keep his wife, and that he's not so attractive to her as other men are. No, I've had my own thoughts; but after one or two scenes, which you'll remember, I've let you go your own way."

He paused for a moment and then continued with a certain hardness: "I am twenty years older than you. I've seen you run after by young men. I've seen you run after some yourself. I've seen you going out to dances and dinners, leaving me behind."

At this Mary was about to protest, but James held up his hand. "Oh, yes, yes. It was for my sake! So that I could be nice and quiet—and talk to your mother! I wasn't wanted. And I saw I spoilt your time. After one or two experiences I saw it all quite clearly. You showed me. There are more ways of making a man understand than by words." His tone was a little pathetic. "So I—I retired. And you?—you had a good time. Dances, dinners, theatres; taxis home with nice young men; week-end parties in congenial company. Oh, I'd have been in the way!"

Mary utilized the pause that sheer weakness imposed on the dying man. "But, James," she protested, "if you'd ever said——!"

"Said? I did say! Quite often, if you will be pleased to remember, at the beginning. But it was no use. It made things worse. And I am too big a man, in the end, to let things descend to pettiness. Jealousy is an ignoble emotion; it degrades a man, and it does no good. And short of brute force there's no argument for a flighty woman. I don't like brute force. I wouldn't use it. But when you got too outrageous—I fined you."

She fell back on tearfulness. "James, do you mean you didn't trust me?"

"Of course I didn't trust you. Only a fool trusts his wife after she's ceased to love him. But only a fool makes a fuss. I didn't make a fuss. I fined you."

"Oh, James," sobbed Mary. And then she came to the point. "How much?"

"It depended; there were various classes," and he turned over the leaves of his black note-book. "As I say, I haven't charged you with statutory offences. But there are many offences unknown to the law which are quite as bad as a lot of those known to it. Apart from infidelity, you'll remember I mentioned bad temper, inconsiderateness, and neglect. Under the British system of law those are not punishable offences. But under my system they are."

"I haven't neglected you!" burst out his wife.

"You've fed me. You've run the house. And so, against the debit side, I've credited your wages as housekeeper. Thirty shillings a week and your keep. But you've never been anything more than a housekeeper to me since the year after we married. And I've allowed you privileges most housekeepers don't have. And then there are your clothes. I haven't charged you with them. And railway fares. Oh, lots of things. I've been most generous; really. And," he reflected, "you haven't given me much. Most housekeepers would have been quite as attentive—and more polite. And, I think, rather more affectionate. But now we've come to the reckoning." Then he consulted his book. "I'll only give you a few specimens; there are so many items. But everything is down there; and I'm leaving you the book in my will. 'January the fourth'—that was the year after we were married—'One scene, £2'—you'll remember that scene; it was about the first one we had. You wanted to go to Monte Carlo; and when I explained that I couldn't find the money, you flew into a temper and talked about young wives and old husbands and so on. Rather unkind, I think. But it was quite a cheap scene." He paused a minute to summon his failing energy; then he went on reading. "Same year, June the tenth. 'Inconsiderateness £1 10s.'"

"What do you call inconsiderateness?"

"I'm just going to tell you. That day I had a bad headache. When you went out I asked you if you'd get me some aspirin. When you came back you hadn't got it, and when I inquired about it, all you said was," and he referred to the book, "'Oh, James, why can't you send the servants on your errands?' I don't think one pound ten shillings is exorbitant?"

Jane thought it time to interfere. "James," she ejaculated furiously, "you're preposterous."

"No, Jane, I'm not. I'm practical. Not selfishly practical; altruistically practical. I may not have done myself much good by this system—nothing, I think, would have done me much good. If I'd told you of my system, you'd have badgered me out of it, or made life hell for me one way or another. But I'm doing a service to humanity. Perhaps wives will behave a bit better to their husbands when my system becomes known—and, possibly, practised. But I'd like to give you an idea of another class of fine." He turned again to the note-book. "I take this from the account for three years ago. 'Affair with Algernon, £100.' I don't think there is much need to enlarge on that, is there, Mary?"

"I don't know what you mean."

"Oh, yes, you do. And the itemized account is there in case you have forgotten anything. For instance, you remember the day you had him to tea here, and when I came in rather unexpectedly—not, I assure you, intending to catch you—you were sitting, rather flushed, at one end of the sofa, while he was standing, also rather flushed, just by you; both considerably confused? That was five pounds. And then there was the serious affair of the pink nightdress."

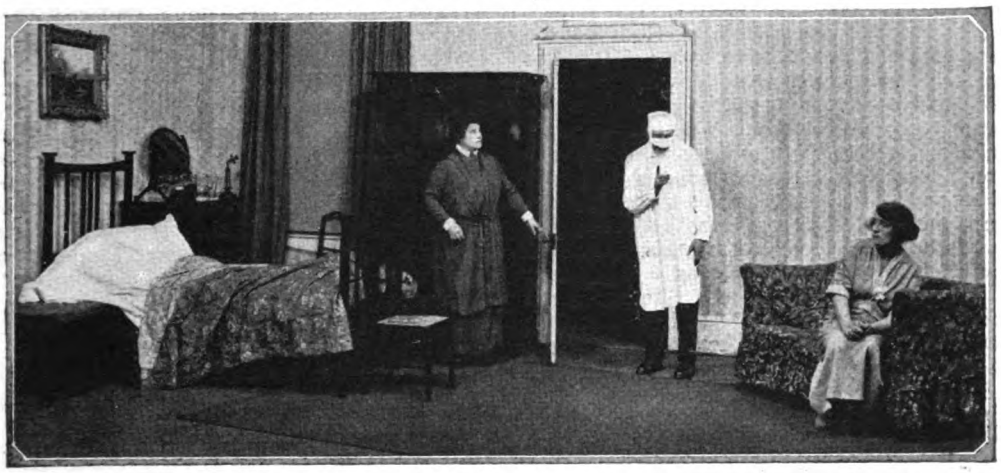
"James!"

But James was unmoved, and went on inexorably. "Really I let you off easily at one hundred pounds, I think. A jury would very likely have given me more. Oh, Algernon wasn't an expensive lover." He turned over the leaves rapidly. "Let me see, I think your most extravagant affair was Charles."

It was with dignity that Jane, who had by now somewhat regained command of the situation and herself, took up the reins of the conversation.

"Can you not spare us these details?"

James stopped. "Very well. I won't give you any more items. But they are all here. And now I must tell you the final balance of the account." He turned



For a moment Mary did not hear them, and when she looked at the old man's rather gruesome presence she gave a terrified cry.

to the end of the note-book. " I find that, deducting from the total estimated value of my estate the amount of board and lodging for you, Jane, and sundry fines, etc.——" The even flow of his voice suddenly ceased, there was a slight choke and James fell back on the pillow. Both women sprang to their feet—they had not quite realized the man's condition, or had forgotten it in their excitement. But the end was not yet. As his wife leant over him James opened his eyes and asked her feebly for a glass of water. With a trembling hand Mary fetched it, and James drank.

" I beg your pardon," he said with a whimsical smile, " I'm sorry I left you on tenter-hooks. I find there is left five hundred and twenty-seven pounds."

The blow had fallen, and it was a heavy one. Mary and her mother had no breath for words. There was silence. James leant back exhausted.

AND then Jane, in whom a tempest had long been brewing, sprang to her feet. In these moments the elemental self comes to the surface, and it was a fish-wife that appeared in Jane.

" It's scandalous ! " she ranted. " Scandalous ! Playing these disgusting tricks upon your wife, unknown to her, in secret, and then disinheriting her, leaving her to penury—without warning, without giving her a chance."

But James still had it in him to fight. He lifted himself, weak and agitated, and faced his mother-in-law.

" Oh, I knew there'd be a row. But, in justice, I wanted to tell you all this before I died ; and I'll have it out, if it kills me, Jane. Now, look here ; I didn't play tricks, I didn't give you both no chance. I gave you hundreds of chances. If you hadn't been hard and stupid and cruel it would never have come to this. And as for penury—Mary has eight hundred a year of her own."

Argument would not deter the woman, she overwhelmed the even flow of his words with her flood of fury.

" It's mean and vindictive revenge ; that's what it is."

But James, holding up his hand, made one last protest. " No ; it's not revenge. It's justice. What good would revenge be to me ? I'm dying. Wherever I'm going, I'll have no use for revenge. And do you think I'd maliciously deprive any living thing of just enjoyment, so that, during these last moments of my life, I could have the petty satisfaction of seeing them squirm ? No ; it's not revenge. It's justice."

Jane turned to him with fresh fury. " Who are you leaving your money to ? "

" I might say that that was my own business," feebly objected James. " But I'll tell you. I'm leaving it to John."

" John ! " exclaimed his wife.

" That outcast ! " raged Jane with virulence, " and his housemaid ! "

James was recovering his imperturbability. He replied with almost his old easiness. " I suppose his housemaid is still with him. In fact, from inquiries, I believe she makes him quite happy. We are a pretty faithful, easily-contented lot in my family. And I've come to the conclusion that there may be worse fates in life than running away with a housemaid."

The exertion was telling on him, and passing his hand over his forehead he lay

back. "I wish that man would come," he querulously exclaimed. "He'll be too late if he doesn't take care. This has taken it out of me. And I want to get it all settled—for your sakes as well as for other reasons—some small matters I want to adjust. I don't suppose you mind much now; but five hundred pounds is something, and if I don't put this through, John gets practically everything." With these words he turned over to rest his exhausted faculties, and closed his eyes.

Jane cast aside restraint. She paced the room like a mad beast. She shook her fist at the figure on the bed, while she shrieked at him.

Mary was shocked. "Mother!" she exclaimed, and rose to restrain her.

"I don't care," shouted Jane, shaking herself free. "He shall know what I think of him before he dies." Standing by the bed she directed her fury to penetrating his consciousness. "You're—an old curmudgeon—an old——"

Mary pulled her from behind. "Mother, mother!"

Jane's breath failed her; she choked into silence. Mary had got between her and the bed in sheer fear lest her mother's violence should culminate in an actual assault on her dying husband, and as Jane ceased she looked down on James's face. In that face she saw something which made her almost stop breathing. She bent hurriedly over the prostrate man. Jane was fussing to get her handkerchief. Suddenly Mary recoiled and drew herself up. In utter terror she turned to the other woman: "Mother, mother," she cried, in hushed horror. "He's dead!"

Jane was not to be taken in by so transparent an artifice to evade her getting home on the offender.

"Dead!" she said in contempt. "Nonsense, he's shamming, he's ashamed."

Mary, who knew better, merely started wailing as her mother stooped over James and continued: "He's not dead. James, come now! open your eyes."

Then, beginning to be a little shaken, she tried to raise him. His head lolled back. There was silence except for Mary's moaning.

Jane's efficiency in the midst of this horror reasserted itself. "Quick!" she cried, "get a mirror!" And she unbuttoned James's nightshirt and stopped to listen for the beating of his heart. But James merely lolled.

Jane watched her mother while the test was made. Looking at the mirror, Jane let the body fall back on the pillow. "He's dead," she said.

Mary gave a wail, and sank into a chair, to lie there sobbing. Jane replaced the mirror and returned to stand over the bed, looking at the dead man in silence. At last she went over to Mary and put her arm round her.

The event had shattered even this woman's self-confidence, and allowed the softness that every mother has somewhere in her soul to gain a moment's ascendancy.

"There, my dear," she said soothingly. "It was bound to come soon. The doctor will be here presently; but he is beyond help now." Then, recollection returning, bitterness came back into her voice. "And that lawyer never came in time! Well, it doesn't make so much difference now."

"Mother, you're brutal. How can you! He's dead."

"I know. I was only making the best of it."

"Mother, can't you understand?" But she was interrupted by a loud ringing and knocking at the hall door.

Jane gave a grim smile. "There's that man! Too late! I'll go and let him in."

She went out and Mary crossed over to the bed. Half afraid, and struggling with her sobs, she looked at the dead face, and then drew the sheet up over it; sinking, then, trembling on to a chair beside the bed, and staring before her in horror.

(4)

CHARLES CROSBY was a mean and insignificant little man who lived a mean and insignificant little life. He was a cousin of James Smith, on whom from time to time he preyed. For James Smith was the rich relation of Charles Crosby and various others; in fact, Charles, at the time of our story, was a good many hundred pounds in debt to James. Now James was at heart a kind and generous man. In addition to his periodic compliances with his cousin's request for money he had privately intimated to him that, although these moneys were loans on which interest had to be paid during his life, at his death he would wipe the slate clean. Hence it happened that when Cousin Charles heard the news of James's accident his heart was filled with conflicting emotions. Sorrow, of course, for James's hard fate, a certain elation, I fear, at the possible prospect of a freedom from periodical payments of interest, and, most of all, anxiety lest anything should chance to go wrong with the plans he knew were in James's mind as to the redemption of the debt in his last will and testament.

Hence Cousin Charles thought it diplomatic to pay a visit to James to inquire after his health; and it was he, and not the solicitor, whom Jane found at the door.

"Oh! it's you, Charles, is it?" she said with a start, and then, brusquely: "Come in! He's dead!"

Charles gasped: "Dead!"

Jane was not in a condition to stand nonsense. "Yes, *dead*, I said," she rasped. "You'd better come upstairs."

They went up in silence.

"Mary!" said Jane, throwing open the bedroom door. "It isn't the solicitor; it's Mr. Crosby."

Mary, fortified by her conventional training, found it possible to utter the ordinary "How d'do, Mr. Crosby?" adding: "Isn't this terrible?"

"Terrible! terrible!" whined Charles in his most sanctimonious voice.

"Did he die peacefully?" continued Charles.

For a moment Jane could not reply. Then with an effort she answered calmly, "Oh—er—quite peacefully. He passed away almost in his sleep. We never knew he was dead till dear Mary went to see if he wanted anything, and found he—he had gone."

This was a little too much for the less hardened daughter, and Mary, with a shudder, uttered an involuntary "Oh!"

But Jane caught her up, "Yes," she went on quickly, "he was spared any suffering at the last."

"Good; good!" snuffled Cousin Charles. Then, in a hushed voice, he asked: "May I—look at him?"

"Of course," assented Jane, and they went to the bed.

By this time Jane had quite recovered her self-possession, and, glancing from the corpse to the cousin, she observed almost humorously: "You have a look of James, you know." There was something a little lacking in tact, Charles thought, in comparing him to a corpse. But he assented, "Yes, same blood, of course; even second cousins are relations. Ha! ha!" Then, relapsing into solemnity: "Poor James!"

Jane replaced the sheet over her son-in-law's face, and she and Charles wandered back to their seats. For a moment or two there was an awkward silence. Then Charles's tact asserted itself. "A good man!" he piously ejaculated, "a generous man. In fact, he did me a good turn more than once. I can tell you frankly—we are all friends—practically relations—he lent me five hundred pounds at various times. I call that generous, don't you? And, what's more, he told me privately that he'd make it all right before he died. He was going to let off all his debtors, he said, dear chap, in his own humorous way, once he was certain he was permanently provided for himself. He'd see to that in his will."

Jane gave a start. "His will?"

"Yes. In fact," went on Charles confidentially, "that is one of the reasons I came round to-day. To see him," he hastily added, "of course, to see him; but just to remind him, too, of his promise. No need, though; he was always a man of business, and a man of his word."

"James has left no will!" The words came out like bullets from a machine-gun, and had almost as great an effect on Charles.

"What?" he gasped.

"He sent for a solicitor half an hour ago, to make his will; but he's died before the man's come. We're expecting him any minute."

"My God!"

"Yes," assented Jane, with a near approach to a smile, and then went on with determination: "It's worse for us. The whole property goes to that scapegrace, John!" She had almost forgotten to maintain the air of a victim of disaster, but she suitably reassumed it.

"We are disinherited," she pronounced, "by fate."

For a moment Charles was even able nobly to forget his own hundreds in contemplating the greater catastrophe of another.

"Good heavens!" he murmured. "This is a terrible thing."

After which his own hundreds began to rise to the surface again, and altogether he was considerably moved.

"It's diabolical!" he cried, suddenly, pulling at his beard. And then he let his feelings get the better of him, and fairly shouted at the old woman.

"Oh, why—*why* couldn't you keep him alive?"

"We did our best," said Jane, in an injured tone.

"Was there no way to sustain him? Alcohol? Oxygen?"

Jane was on her defence, and stiffly observed, "Mr. Crosby, I have been a nurse. I did all I could."

"Forgive me," apologized Charles. "I know you would be gentleness and efficiency itself. I am sorry I was hasty. My feelings——" and he tailed off.

Jane was generous.

"Not at all. I know how you must be feeling. It is indeed terribly unjust—to us all."

"Cheated!" muttered the old man half to himself; and there was silence for a moment.

All this time Mary had sat, overwhelmed, in her chair. While the conversation lapsed Jane looked intently at Crosby, and thought. Suddenly she started, and glanced quickly at Mary, who did not see her look,

but remained lethargic. The light of resolve came into the woman's eyes, and she became suddenly alert. Turning to Mary she said in a slightly constrained voice: "Mary, run into my bedroom, will you, and fetch me a handkerchief? Put a little eau de-Cologne on it, dear."

As soon as Mary had obediently disappeared, Jane jumped up and went over to Charles, whom she addressed in low, quick tones.

"Yes; cheated; that's it; we've been cheated; all of us. By fate. It's not fair; it's not right. Why should James be defeated in his intentions, and we all defrauded? It's wrong."

Charles was somewhat startled at this vehemence.

"I know," he admitted, and then went on despairingly, "Oh, well, it can't be helped."

"It can be helped. It *can* be helped, I tell you."

"How?"

"Listen!" whispered Jane breathlessly. "We've not a moment to lose. You and I must agree; then we can tell Mary; she won't like it, but she'll have to come in. You must be James."

"Me?" stammered Charles in bewilderment.

"Yes. You're like him. The lawyer doesn't know James—hardly at all. He's all swathed up in bandages, very feeble—can't write—dictates the will—can't sign—makes his mark—we witness. Oh, don't you see?"

"Good Lord!"

"It's simple—*simple!*"

"What about—about James?"

Jane waved James aside. She leant over Charles as if to draw assent from him. And half stunned, half hypnotized, he muttered: "All right."

THEN Mary entered with the handkerchief. As Jane took it from her daughter she clasped hold of her hands.

"Mary," she said in a low voice, "I want you to stand by me."

"Of course I will, mother."

"I want you to help put the things right that James hadn't time—hadn't the time to do."

"What do you mean?"

"We must carry out James's intentions."

"But we can't."

"We can."

"How? What intentions?"

Jane looked fixedly into Mary's eyes, and gripped her hands.

"The intentions James had of making his will, and doing justice to us and Mr. Crosby here before he died."

"Oh, God!" exclaimed Mary, recoiling in horror; but her mother held her firmly. After a moment's pause she looked up into her mother's eyes. "But—but how could that be done—if we wanted to?"

Jane gave a slight sigh of relief. She was well on her way to victory when it came to ways and means.

"It's quite easy. Here's Mr. Crosby—very like James; we'll let him take James's part, and make the will."

At last Mary realized, and it was with greater horror this time that she cried: "Oh, no! no!"

"Mary!" commanded her mother strongly. "Don't be a fool. This is right, it's"—this stuck in her throat a bit, but she managed to get out—"justice."

"Mother!" gasped Mary, revolted.

Jane was angry. "Yes, it is—the truest justice. You know it is. If you think clearly, you'll see it is. Now come, there's not a moment to waste. That man may be here any minute." And then, disregarding her daughter, she turned briskly to Crosby.

"You must come with me."

Mary was not won. Sinking into a chair she sullenly murmured:—

"It's—awful. I won't help."

Jane resisted anger nobly. "Do be sensible!" she pleaded; but Mary shook her head.

"Oh, very well. Come on, Mr. Crosby. You must get—changed, and then I'll put your bandages on. Mary, at least you must keep them out till we are ready."

Charles had been sitting, during this conversation, in palpitating thought, and now he resisted.

"Oh, well—but I don't know; what does it mean?"

"Mean? It means five hundred pounds to you; and justice to us," cried Jane, and then, rather as an after-thought, "and, of course, it means we are carrying out James's wishes. Come! you must. It is only right, your duty—come quick!"

She hustled him out, and Mary was left sunk in her chair, clenching and unclenching her hands. She was still sitting in solemn thought when Jane and Charles re-entered, Charles, now, with a nightshirt over his own clothes, and his head swathed in bandages. For a moment she did not hear them, and when she looked round and up at the old man's rather gruesome presence she gave a terrified cry.

"Don't be afraid, Mrs. Smith," said Charles in a shaking voice.

"It's all right," answered Mary, faintly.

"Come!" said Jane quickly to Charles. "We must move him." and added to Mary: "You needn't help, if you don't like. Perhaps you'd better sit quiet there."

She went to the bed, reluctantly accompanied by Charles.

"Where shall we put it?" asked the old man in a hushed and frightened voice. Quickly correcting himself, "him, I mean," he added.

Jane pointed to the wardrobe. "We might be seen putting him in the next room. He must go in the wardrobe."

Charles didn't like the job. "Oh, Lord!" he groaned.

But he helped; and the two together turned down the sheets, and took James's body out. It was a laborious job, and not done very well. The body, at one time, slipped to the floor with a thump, which drew an agonized "Oh!" from Mary, who had turned away so that she could not see what was happening. There was silence, except for the noises made by the removal, and the heavy breathing of Jane and Crosby. At last they managed to cram the corpse into the cupboard, and after several efforts they pushed the door to and fastened it.

Charles wiped his forehead. "Thank God, that's done. Oh, dear, I'm worried. This is dreadful."

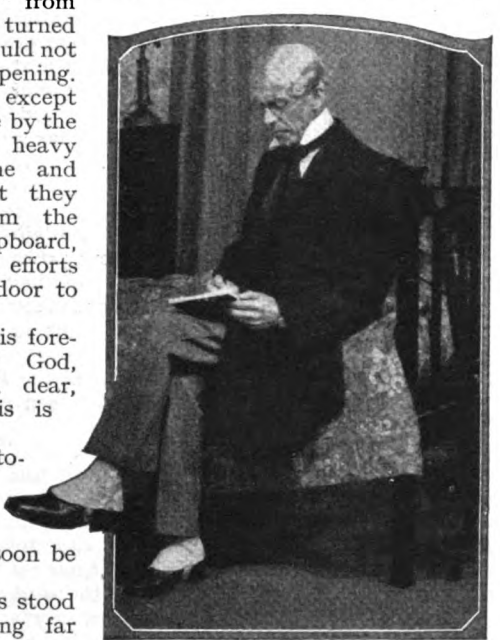
"Pull yourself together, man," said Jane, with contemptuous courage; "it will soon be over."

Suddenly Charles stood in thought, looking far away, through Jane, through the walls, out into space. Then he smiled.

"That's better!" congratulated Jane, somewhat surprised at the effect of her exhortation.

Charles turned away still smiling.

"Oh, there's an element of humour about it all, isn't there?—of a gruesome kind, of a gruesome kind."



"If you will tell me, quite simply, what you want," said the solicitor, "that will be enough."

At this moment there came a ring and a knocking at the outside door, which made everyone start. Jane hastily turned to Charles.

"Quick! Into bed with you!"

She hustled him in, tucked him up, and turned to Mary.

"Now, dear, will you let him in?"

Mary went. Jane gave a last look to the bed, and bending over the old impostor whispered: "Now, be strong! And mind you're very weak. Faint voice. And don't turn over. Just speak. You know your part. Leave everything to Mary; nothing to me, because I must witness."

Charles answered in a muffled voice, "Oh, yes, I know my part. Nothing to you; I'll remember."

Then Mary entered with Mr. Stone. Mr. Stone was a solicitor, and that description is sufficient. He carried his hat and stick in his left hand, and a small bag in his right. Mary presented the new-comer to her mother.

"Mr. Stone, this is my mother, Mrs. Mackintosh."

Mr. Stone put his bag on the table and shook hands with Jane, who rose to meet him.

"How d'ye do, Mrs. Mackintosh?"

With perfect histrionic ease, Jane had assumed her part. "We are very glad to see you, Mr. Stone," she said, in a hushed voice. "We were afraid you might be too late. You are only just in time."

Mr. Stone was careful not to let his voice carry to the bed.

"Oh, I hope not, I hope not. Sometimes, you know, one thinks a case worse than it is."

"I am afraid one could scarcely think this case worse than it is," observed Jane, grimly.

"Really—really? I am sorry." Then he turned to Mary.

"Will you tell your husband I am here? He is asleep?"

Jane was taking no chances, and she intercepted. "Drowsy; very drowsy. And very weak, Mr. Stone; so weak, so very near the end, that all he will be able to do will be to dictate his will. We dare not let him move, and his arms were terribly injured in the accident, so that he cannot even sign the will. But I think he will be able to make his mark."

"That will do—with witnesses."

"Then I will tell him you are here."

She went to the bed and shook Charles very gently.

"James! Mr. Stone is here."

In a very weak and slow voice the old

man faltered. "Oh, Mr. Stone, Mr. Stone? Thank you." Then, a little louder, "Mr. Stone, I am very ill."

Mr. Stone had approached the bed by this time.

"I am very sorry to hear it. I trust——"

But Charles cut him short. "Let us get to business; I have so little strength left that I must waste none of it on trivialities. I want to make my will." Here he gasped a little, and then went on, "Are you ready? I will dictate."

The solicitor went to his bag, produced a form therefrom, and returned to seat himself on the bed.

"Pray go on."

In an almost dying voice Charles gave his instructions.

"I wish my will to be only a few words—only a few words. It need be no more, need it?"

"If you will tell me, quite simply, what you want, that will be enough. I will frame it for you, and read it."

"I don't want technicalities. I will say what I mean."

"There need be no technicalities, Mr. Smith, if your meaning is perfectly clear."

"My meaning shall be perfectly clear. But I want to say one thing before I start to dictate. As you may know, Mr. Stone, my nearest relations are my wife and a son by a former marriage."

"So I understand."

"Well, I want you to know that if my will does not appear to provide for all those to whom I seem to owe a natural affection, I have my reasons."

Stone was without embarrassment, being a solicitor.

"I understand that, unfortunately, your son——"

"Never mind details, please," interrupted Charles. "All I want to make clear is that, however little my will may seem based on natural affection, I have my reasons, my own reasons."

"Of course, of course, Mr. Smith. It is no business of mine to inquire those reasons; nor can they make any difference to the validity of the will."

"Quite so. I am glad to be assured of that. Well, then, I will begin."

Stone got ready to write.

"Can you hear me?"

"Perfectly."

"This is the last will and testament of me, James Smith, of 14a, Stanwell Gardens, London."

"London," repeated the solicitor, taking it down.

"Is that right as a beginning?"

"Absolutely."

"I give and bequeath—is that the right expression?"

"Yes."

"All my estate."

"Real and personal estate?"

"Real and personal estate."

"Shall I add: 'of every description'?"

"Yes, please," and then he continued firmly: "To my old and valued friend Charles Crosby."

At these astonishing words Jane gave a violent start. Mary, who had been more or less dazed, was galvanized into an "Oh!" Charles, however, went on feebly but calmly: "Does one put 'absolutely'?"

By this time the solicitor realized he had happened on a drama, but he wore a professionally unmoved face.

"It is better," he observed.

"'Absolutely,' then. And will you put in the usual bit about revoking all other wills, and so on?"

'Certainly. What about an executor?"

"Oh, Crosby."

"Very well."

DURING this dialogue the atmosphere in the other part of the room had been volcanic. Jane had moved rapidly over to Mary, and, her face livid with passion, had been talking to her in rapid whispers, to which Mary had only been able to utter monosyllables or shake her head.

Charles gave a deep sigh of relief.

"Will you read it to me, please?"

And Stone read: "'This is the last will and testament of me, James Smith, of 14a, Stanwell Gardens, London. I give and bequeath all my real and personal estate of every description to my old and valued friend, Charles Crosby, absolutely. And I appoint the said Charles Crosby sole executor of this, my will, and revoke all previous wills by me at any time heretofore made, and declare this writing to be my last will and testament. In witness whereof'—and so on. Is that what you want?"

"That is just what I want. Jane!"

Jane looked hurriedly up.

"I'd have liked to have left you some little thing for old times' sake, but then you couldn't have witnessed, you know; and I know you particularly want to witness my will."

This was the final touch, and it moved Jane to fury.

"I will not witness your will. Nor, I know, will Mary," she shouted.

Charles was quite resigned. "Oh, very well, we'll have to have the servant in. She and Mr. Stone will do."

Jane was raging, but beaten. It was worse to have the servant in.

"Oh, all right, I'll sign," she muttered.

"Thank you, Jane. I knew you would," smoothly crooned Charles, and then he turned to the solicitor.

"Will you please put the document right down here, by my poor hand? I can only just hold the pen to make my mark."

Stone lent over him to his far side, placed the deed conveniently, gave him the pen to hold, and he managed, with difficulty, to make the necessary symbol.

"There now, it's over!" gasped the old man with relief. "Get it witnessed, won't you, Mr. Stone? And then I can die in peace. I'd like to get Mary's signature, too, if she will do me the honour."

Stone took the document round to Jane, who signed it, as did Mary. The hands of both the women were as unsteady as their voices and their wits. Stone turned to Charles with a congratulatory smile.

"It is all finished, Mr. Smith."

"Thank you; thank you. I am deeply obliged. And I cannot tell you how glad I am that you have caught me in time. I will take the will myself, I think, Mr. Stone. Somehow I have a feeling I should like to die with that will in my possession. A queer fancy, isn't it?" He laughed feebly. "But we dying men must be humoured, mustn't we, Mr. Stone? — must be humoured."

Even the professional Stone was embarrassed.

"Oh, you'll get well yet, and live for years, I hope."

"I hope so, too," cackled Charles. "Indeed I hope so; live for years--for many years. But, somehow, I think James Smith is practically dead already."

"With your courage——" hopefully began Mr. Stone; but Charles interrupted him.

"Yes; one has to have courage, doesn't one? And courage finds its reward. In queer ways, sometimes, Mr. Stone. But—I detain you. Pity you can't detain me, isn't it?" He cackled again. "But you can't. And I don't want you to. No; I wouldn't have you detain poor James Smith. I don't want to be rude, but I feel like the man who said to his friend: 'Will you be pleased to leave the room; I wish to die.'"

The solicitor was only too anxious to be off—he was beginning to feel uncomfortable.

"Here is your will," he said, giving it to him and tucking it under the bedclothes, "and I can only hope you will live longer than you think."

"No; James Smith is better dead, on the whole. Thank you, Mr. Stone. Good-bye."

Charles sank into apparent lethargy, cuddling his will. By the fire the two women stood together in a state of volcanic suppression.

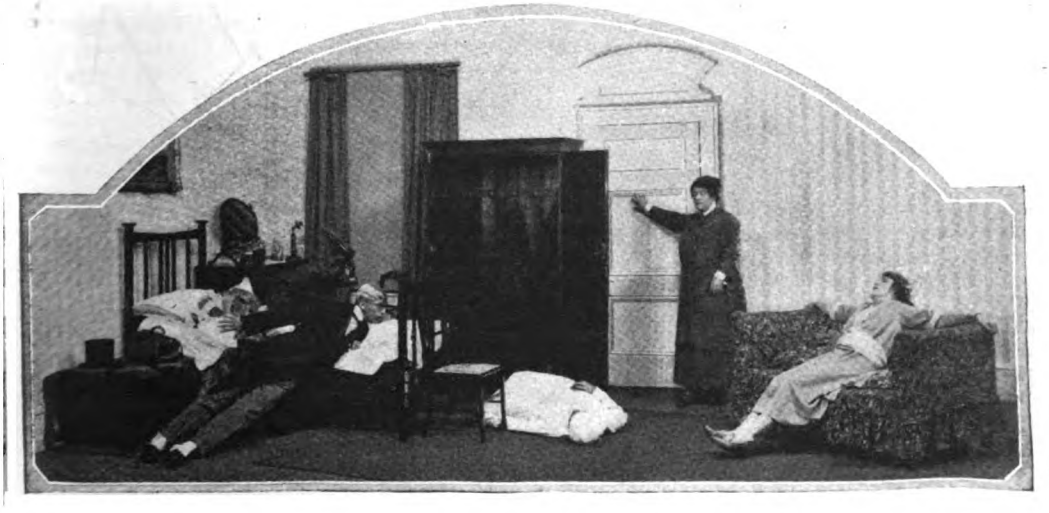
Stone got his bag off the table and went to say good-bye.

"Good-bye, Mrs. Mackintosh!" and he shook hands with Jane. "Good-bye, Mrs. Smith!" and he added, consolingly, "I still hope something unexpected may happen."

Mary shook his hand.

"Thank you, Mr. Stone. Good-bye."

HIS farewells over, the solicitor crossed to get his hat and stick; his way led past the wardrobe, and just as he was opposite the door he tripped slightly and put his hand out to steady himself. Instantly from within the wardrobe came a rumbling sound; the doors burst open, and the corpse of James Smith fell headlong out.



PERPLEXITIES. By Henry E. Dudeney.

611.—PERPETUAL CHECK.

A CORRESPONDENT (J. M.) asks, "What are the fewest possible moves in which a position in a game of chess may be reached in which perpetual check may be forced?" He gives the example shown,

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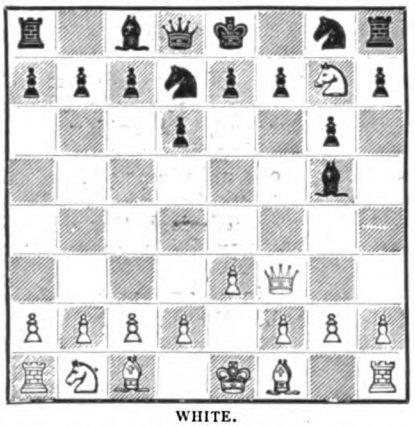


WHITE.

which may be reached in six moves, as follows: 1. P—K 3, P—Q 3; 2. Kt—K B 3, P—K Kt 3; 3. Kt—Q 4, B—R 3; 4. Q—B 3, B—Kt 4; 5. Kt—K 6, Kt—Q 2; 6. Kt—Kt 7, ch., and White has a perpetual check by playing the knight alternately to K 6 and Kt 7. Well, I find a good many ways of doing it in six moves, but it can be done in three. Can you find how? Of course the play, as in the example given, may be absurd, but the moves must be strictly legal for both sides. And it is not to the point to say that the Kt can win the Q and the game and therefore White would not draw.

612.—MARKET TRANSACTIONS.

HERE is a form of puzzle that is always very popular, judging by the letters I receive. A farmer goes to market and buys 100 animals at a total cost of £100. The price of cows being £5 each, sheep £1 each, and rabbits 1s. each, how many of each kind does he buy? Most people will solve this, if they succeed at all, by more or less laborious trial, but there are several direct ways of getting the solution, though it is quite impossible within the limits of space allotted to me to make them clear to the reader.

613.—TWO LITTLE PARADOXES.

A CHILD may ask a question that will profoundly perplex a learned philosopher, and we are often meeting with paradoxes that demand a little thought before we can explain them in simple language. The following was recently put to me: "Imagine a man going to the North Pole. The points of the compass are, as everybody knows.

N
W E
S

He reaches the Pole and, having passed over it, must turn about to look north. East is now on his left-hand side, west on his right-hand side, and the points of the compass therefore

N
E W
S

which is absurd. What is the explanation?"

I was lately standing with a child in front of a large mirror that reflected the whole body. "Why is it," asked the intelligent youngster, "that I am turned right round in the mirror so that right is left and left right, and yet top is not bottom and bottom top? If it reverses sideways, why does it not reverse lengthways? Why am I not shown standing on my head?"

614.—AN ENIGMA.

My head and tail both equal are,
My middle slender as a bee.
Whether I stand on head or heel
Is quite the same to you or me.
But if my head should be cut off,
The matter's true, though passing strange,
Directly I to nothing change.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

606.—DIGITAL SQUARES.

IN every one of the following eight sums all the nine digits are used once and the difference between the successive totals is throughout 9:—

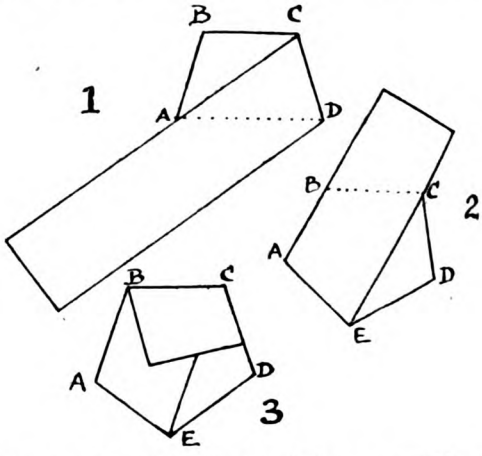
243	341	154	317	216	215	318	235
675	586	782	628	738	748	654	746
918	927	936	945	954	963	972	981

607.—LETTER MULTIPLICATION.

THE answer is 54618 × 3 = 163854.

608.—FOLDING A PENTAGON.

BY folding A over, find C, so that B C equals A B. Then fold as in FIG. 1, across the point A, and this will give you the point D. Now fold as in FIG. 2, making



the edge of the ribbon lie along A B, and you will have the point E. Continue to fold as in FIG. 3, and so on, until all the ribbon lies on the pentagon. This, as I have said, is very easy, but it is interesting and instructive.

609.—MISSING WORDS.

THE words in their order are: I, it, tie, rite, inter, retain, certain, reaction, cremation, importance.

610.—A CHESS CHARADE.

THE word is MESS-MATE.

"TOPPIE" EDWARDS

The Man who Photographs the News

by SIDNEY DARK

YOU will find him in an office in a court off Fleet Street. A short, clean-shaven, fair man, with an air of eager, cheerful friendliness. The walls of his office are covered with American business mottoes. "Let's talk business." "When you're down in the mouth, think of the Prophet Jonah. *He* came out all right!" "Smile and hustle." "When there is nothing to do—the Boss will do it."

"Smile and the world smiles with you,
Kick and you kick alone;
For the cheerful grin will let you in
Where the Kicker is never known."

His name is W. J. Edwards, and he is director of the Topical Press Agency (hence the name "Toppie" Edwards, by which all Fleet Street knows him), the first organization ever created for the distribution of photographs to newspapers and periodicals in the same way as the great news agencies —Press Association, Reuter's, Central News, The Associated Press, and so on—distribute the news itself.

In his office Mr. Edwards has an amazing library that contains a million and a half photographic subjects and two hundred thousand negatives. There is not a living person of any distinction whose photograph he cannot supply at a moment's notice; there is not an event of any importance that has happened during the last twenty years of which he cannot supply a reproduction. Press photography is a comparatively recent industry. It now employs thousands of persons all over the world, and the distribution of the photographs is cosmopolitan. For example, pictures of Princess Mary's wedding appeared in the Press in Buenos Ayres as well as in Birmingham, in Bucharest as well as in Bristol. Just as newspapers have their correspondents in every city of importance, so the Topical Press Agency has its representatives everywhere.

In the early days of Press photography the photographer had to face considerable prejudice, and even to-day a successful Press photographer must be a tactful diplomat. During the Paris Peace Conference there was an amusing example of the photographer's difficulties which I myself witnessed. The Treaty between the Allies and Austria was signed in the Château of St. Germain, which has nowadays been turned into a museum. Specimen cases stood round the walls of the room in which the plenipotentiaries met. An enterprising photographer climbed up on to these cases and balanced himself and his camera on the wooden frames. Just as Dr. Renner, the chief Austrian representative, was making a pathetic appeal for merciful treatment, this gentleman slipped and he and his camera went with a crash through the glass. M. Clemenceau's indignation at the occurrence is something that I recall now with considerable amusement.

But Mr. Edwards, who is certainly one of the fathers, if not the actual father, of his profession, assured me that the difficulties were to him the chief attraction of the work. "Tell me I can't and I will," he said, and he gave me many examples of the ingenuity that has often been exhibited to secure pictures that have appeared in the daily Press. For example, during the reign of King Edward photographers were forbidden to take pictures of the ceremony of the Trooping of the Colour. So Mr. Edwards supplied his men with sectional poles, commonly used by chimney-sweeps. The cameras were fixed at the top of the pole, and the shutter was worked by a pneumatic bulb at the other end.

Some time ago some resentment was caused by the photographers who attended race meetings and took photographs of the more distinguished *habitués*. Their manners were rather crude, perhaps, and it was annoying for a woman, dashing to make a bet, to be asked to pose for a gentleman with a hand-camera. So the order came from authority that no photographers were to be allowed in the enclosures. This did not daunt Mr. Edwards. He fitted one side of a pair of field-glasses with a Zeiss photographic lens an inch by an inch and a half in size. The photographer held up the apparently innocent field-glasses to his eyes, caught the focus, touched a spring, and the picture was taken. It was afterwards, of course, enlarged.

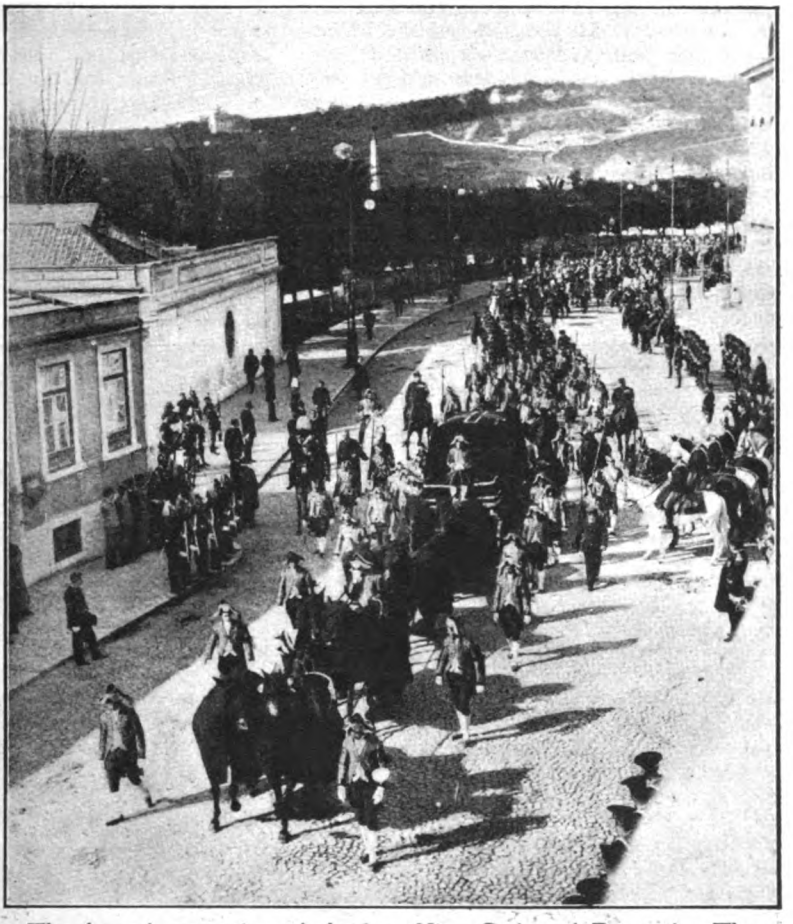
The committee of a famous cricket club sold the monopoly of taking photographs of the matches played on their ground to a rival concern. Mr. Edwards hates monopolies. It goes against his grain to be shut out from anywhere. So he hired the top room of a house in the neighbourhood and there he planted his photographer with a specially made long-distance camera with a forty-inch Voigtlander lens, which enabled him to get almost as good pictures as his rivals inside the ground. He told me that this identical camera, which is four feet long, was particularly useful in securing pictures of yacht-racing, where the photographer is necessarily at a very considerable distance from the object which he wishes to reproduce.

Mr. Edwards broke another photographic monopoly at the White City. He was unable to take photographs from the ground in the ordinary way, so he persuaded Spencer, the well-known balloonist, to let him go up with him in the captive balloon that was floating over the Exhibition, and from this position he obtained one of the most wonderful panoramic photographs I have ever seen. Incidentally this feat nearly cost Mr. Edwards his life, for the photograph was taken on a very stormy day, and, in its descent, the balloon crashed against the telegraph wires in Wood Lane, and both aeronaut and photographer only just escaped being thrown out.

In the days before the use of aeroplanes had become common, panoramic photographs of such events as the Derby were taken by fixing a camera to the tail of a kite which was controlled by a cable worked by a sixty-pound winch. The shutter was released by electricity.

The most wonderful news-photograph ever taken, showing the scene in Madrid at the actual moment the bomb was thrown at the King and Queen of Spain on their wedding-day.

In 1906 Mr. Edwards was sent out by the *Illustrated London News* to take photographs of the marriage of the present King and Queen of Spain in Madrid. It will be remembered that an attempt was made to assassinate the King while the wedding procession was proceeding through the streets of the capital. By a pure accident, a Spaniard with a small hand-camera was taking a snap of the procession just as the attempt on the life of the King was made. No other photographer was on the spot, and none of the English photographic representatives knew that such a picture had been taken until it appeared next morning in one of the Madrid papers. Mr. Edwards, who is pushfulness, hustle, and ingenuity personified, secured the rights of this picture for England, and the value of photographic copyrights may be gathered from the fact that after this particular picture had appeared in the *Illustrated London News* the second rights were sold for as much as one hundred pounds. Now that the market is so much wider and so many more papers print photographs, the fees are much larger than they were sixteen years ago. During the war Mr. Edwards secured a pathetic photograph of a Serbian soldier, sick and wounded, sitting on the steps of a hospital in Nisch. This photograph is said to be the most poignant representation of agony ever taken by the camera, and it has earned in fees over five hundred pounds. This figure gives some idea of the size of the market and the profit-earning possibilities of one of the most modern of all industries.



The funeral procession of the late King Carlos of Portugal. The difficulties attending the taking of this photograph are described on the next page.

The international organization of the Press photographic industry was not entirely interrupted by the war. Dutch photographers were allowed by the German authorities to take photographs inside the German lines. These photographs, in due time, reached the offices of the Topical Press, and prints of them were regularly sent by Mr. Edwards to the naval and military authorities. In this way it sometimes happened that very valuable information was secured. The Admiralty, for instance, learned much that was of vital importance concerning the fortifications of Ostend from Dutch pictures which reached them through Mr. Edwards's good offices.

"Never be beaten, and always do your best to beat the other fellow," is another of Mr. Edwards's professional mottoes. He has never been content to take a picture from the second-best position when the actual best could be reached with ingenuity and a certain

measure of good-natured impudence. He was in Lisbon at the time of the funeral of the late King Carlos. Accredited Press correspondents and photographers were allowed to stand at a point where something could be seen, but not enough for Mr. Edwards's purpose. So he promptly crossed the street and knocked at the door of a house. Naturally, after the assassination of the King and the Crown Prince, the people of Lisbon were suspicious of strangers and fearful of further anarchist outrages. The house at which Mr. Edwards knocked belonged to a of the workmen, " Somebody will break his neck going up that ladder ; you had better take it away." The man took the hint and five shillings for himself. The ladder was removed and no other photographer had Mr. Edwards's advantage, and he alone secured a really effective picture of an interesting political event.

Probably the reason why Mr. Edwards has been so successful is that he thoroughly enjoys himself all the time. " My work," he said to me, " is not work at all. It's sport." He starts out to snap a big event in

This exclusive photograph of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain addressing a Birmingham crowd was taken shortly before the end of his political career.

naval officer who fortunately could speak English (fortune generally favours the enterprising), and, after some hesitation, he allowed the photographer to go on to his roof, where, by lying in an extremely uncomfortable position and balancing his camera on the parapet, he was able to secure a complete picture of the funeral procession.

He showed similar enterprise in securing a really remarkable photograph of Mr. Chamberlain addressing a Birmingham crowd shortly before the end of his political career. The town hall was being repaired. Mr. Edwards, with his camera, climbed up the ladder on to the scaffolding and said to one exactly the same spirit as another man goes out to shoot pheasants ; and when he bags his game and the other fellow misses, he has just the same satisfaction as a runner who wins a hardly-contested sprint race with a satisfactory prize for the winner. Races, of course, are not won without training, and the successful photograph is not secured without the most careful planning and preparation.

Few trials in modern times have aroused such wide interest as the trial of Mme. Steinheil, " the tragic widow," for the murder of her husband in Paris. Mme. Steinheil was a well-known figure in Paris life and was the close friend of M. Faure, the then President

Mme. Steinheil photographed after her acquittal in the famous trial a few years ago. As soon as this portrait was taken she was hidden away outside Paris, out of reach of other journalists, until the prints had been published in England.

of the French Republic. It was generally understood that the French jury would acquit the lady, and every Press correspondent and photographer in Paris had been instructed to interview her or to get her picture. But Mr. Edwards's agent in Paris had already made his bargain. He had a fast motor-car outside the Palais de Justice. Mme. Steinheil was smuggled out of a side door and spirited away to the Hôtel Terminus, the other journalists following her own car. She was photographed in a private room at the hotel, and as soon as the photographs were taken she was hurried away again to a retreat outside Paris, where she was able to hide from the most prying of journalists until her pictures had reached London and had been produced in the English newspapers.

Speed is, of course, vital in everything to do with the newspaper business. The news paragraphs and the photographs that are topical to-day are out of date to-morrow, and it is the business of the Press photographer not only to get his picture, but to hurry it to the newspaper office as speedily as possible. Mr. Edwards regards the taking of the pictures of the Dempsey-Carpentier fight as perhaps the greatest achievement of his career. The negatives were taken from the ring-side to New York by aeroplane, arriving just too late to catch the *Caronia*. They were put on a fast tug which carried a seaplane, and the tug started to chase the great liner, the films being transferred twenty-five miles out at sea. Arrangements had been made at Liverpool with the Customs authorities to allow the films to be taken ashore without any investigation. The ship anchored at 6.15, the films were landed at 6.30. A fast motor-car was waiting to take them to the Liverpool aerodrome, which they reached at 7.6, and at nine they were at Croydon. The smallest hitch might have cost hours of delay. The rights of reproduction had been sold for large sums of money to the illustrated dailies, and early on the day when they were expected, Mr. Edwards told me, he was rung up once every quarter of an

How the Dempsey-Carpentier pictures were delivered in England—showing the canister containing the films, surrounded by corks and wooden floats in case it should have fallen into the water whilst being delivered to the *Caronia* out at sea.

Mr. Edwards's car being pulled out of a swamp in the Apennines by a team of oxen—there is a distinct touch of irony in this picture of yesterday rescuing to-day.

hour by the assistant editors to know if he had any news. He professes that he was the coolest man in London. He knew that everything possible had been done, and he was really not in the least surprised when his organization beat the scheduled time.

The adventures of the Press photographer are well illustrated by the story of the pictures taken in Central Africa by Captain Buchanan during his recent zoological expedition. The films were wrapped in canvas coverings and carried hundreds of miles by native runners to Nigeria, from where they were dispatched by the French authorities. They reached London safely, were developed, and in due time were printed in innumerable periodicals.

I did not find it difficult to believe Mr. Edwards's statement that he was very fond of travelling, because the man is a mass of nervous energy and is obviously unable to keep still for any length of time. He once attempted to cross the St. Bernard Pass in a motor-car. The car was a hundred-horse-power Italia, but the snow was too much for the motor, and Mr. Edwards and his companions had to be somewhat ingloriously towed up to the hospice by mules. During the same trip the car became stuck in a swamp in the Apennines, from which it had to be rescued by a team of oxen. The picture of this unusual occurrence gives Mr. Edwards particular joy. There is, indeed, a certain irony in yesterday rescuing to-day. As I have suggested, "Toppie" Edwards is an attractive compound of humour and energy. He plays golf, he helps to run the Press Club, he avoids Labour troubles by making his *employés* partners in his business, and he is generally an intriguing human personage living up to the epigrammatic American mottoes that adorn his walls.

A shooting party at Sandringham. This picture of King Edward and his friends is said to be one of the most unconventional Royal photographs ever taken.

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42/- Mattamac" (Reg'd.)

Feather Weight STORMPROOF.

A "Mattamac" is identical in appearance with the usual five-guinea Weatherproof. In utility, also, it equals its much-more-costly Competitor. It wears as long, weighs one-third, and is absolutely waterproof. Light and compact-folding, Wind, Chill, and Wetproof, a "Mattamac" is the Ideal Coat for Holiday and going-away wear. Get one for your Summer Outings, *and shun the imitation.*

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Fits into the jacket pocket.

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For Man, Woman, and Child. Made also for Riding, Sporting, and Military Wear.

"Matta" Fabric is exceedingly compact. The coat worn by the 6-ft. man beneath, when folded, just made this handful.

This is an actual photograph of his hand and the "Mattamac" he wears, folded to fit snugly into his jacket pocket.

WEIGHT 19 ozs.

You can carry a "Mattamac" as easily as a newspaper or umbrella. You can even fold it to fit into your jacket pocket, or Attaché Case, when the Sun shines. Yet it gives complete protection in the rainiest weather—at less than half the cost, and one-third the weight, of ordinary Weathercoats.

Illustrations show unbelted Models Nos. 1 and 2, at **42/-**, in Fawn, Olive, Tan, Grey, Black, or Blue Shades. Belted Models in the same range of colours, cost **47/6**. Children's Models in the six colours are made and stocked at size prices. (See "Mattamac" Booklet.)

"Mattamac" Stormproofs are now sold in many Lands. . . . Imitations are becoming frequent. . . The *genuine* "Mattamac" can be identified by the "Mattamac" label beneath the Coat-hanger. *Look for the Label.*

The "Mattamac"—
Unbelted, 42/- *(19 oz. weight)*
Belted, 47/6 *(21½ oz. weight)*

Model No. 1 **42/-** Model No. 2

MADE IN 11 MODELS, 6 SHADES, 40 SIZES.

Unbelted "Mattamacs" are made for Ladies and Gentlemen at **42/-**, and for Children at prices according to size. Conduit Street, their birthplace and the World's Overcoat centre, is represented in the graceful, tailored "hang," wide skirt, easy Raglan shoulders, and roomy "under-arms."

Each "Mattamac" has wind-strapped adjustable cuffs, perpendicular pockets, lined shoulders, is conscientiously finished in all details, and is guaranteed to be made entirely from the genuine all-weather-proof "Matta" (Reg'd.) Fabric. In ordering, please give measurement around chest over waistcoat (Ladies measure over the Blouse), state height, colour preferred, and enclose remittance. (Post free U.K., extra abroad.)

The featherweight "Mattamac" *itself* is "just right" for 75% of people. For those who need a *heavier* Coat, for hard, rough, Sporting, or Working wear, or for the colder days, we make the durable, wear-defying

DUO-MATTAMAC
PEARSON BROTHERS
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Double Fabric and Wear

34 ozs. Weight, 77/6 up

***Less than* Double Weight & Price**

In cut, style, and finish, it is identical with the featherweight "Mattamac." The only difference is that the 19 oz. featherweight Coat is made up from *single* "Matta" Fabric, whilst the 34 oz. "Duo-Mattamac" is cut from *double* "Matta" Fabric—*two* of the tough, finely-spun cloths, *united* with the proofing *between*.

"Duo-Mattamac" Coats, though double *all through*, are of medium-weight. The ordinary unbelted Coat is, roughly, two-thirds the weight of a Gabardine Raincoat. "Duo-Mattamac" Stormproofs are made in 6 shades and 11 Adult models, following *exactly* the *cut*, colours, and *styles* of Featherweight "Mattamac" Coats. Children's "Duo-Mattamacs" made to order. Prices on request; state age and height.

To order a "Duo-Mattamac":—Send remittance (unbelted Coat, 77/6; Belted, 85/-) stating height, colour, and chest measure *over* waistcoat. If for a Lady, please say so, and measure *over Blouse*. Within 7 days, return for full money is permitted if dissatisfied. You can inspect Models, or order safely by post, or send for the "Mattamac Booklet 26 Y" describing also this "Duo-Mattamac," and showing a sample of its double-texture Fabric. Call at, or send orders to, the address below, or write for "Mattamac Booklet 26 Y."

FEATHERWEIGHT "MATTA" (Registered) FABRIC

from which the "Mattamac" Weathercoat is entirely made, is a light-weight, closely-woven, intensely-strong and compact-folding material. It is tough, "clean" wearing, and absolutely waterproof—so waterproof that even wind-driven rain cannot penetrate a "Mattamac" Stormproof.

SENT TO YOU ON 7 DAYS' FREE APPROVAL.

You can satisfy yourself about a "Mattamac" in actual wear. Each Coat is sent out on the understanding that it can be returned within seven days in exchange for the full purchase price should you so wish. You take no risk whatever in buying; if you do not like the Coat, you need not keep it. You can safely order now, without waiting for the Booklet to reach you.

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Send a p.c. for the "Mattamac Booklet **26 Y**" and colour patterns of "Matta" Fabric, in Fawn, Olive, Tan, Grey, Black, and Blue shades. The Booklet illustrates Town, Country, and Military unbelted Models (**42/-**), the popular Belted Models for Ladies, Gentlemen, and the Military (**47/6**), the Wide-skirted Equestrian Model (unbelted, 22 oz., **59/6**; belted, 24½ oz., **65/-**), and Children's Models for all ages at size prices.

Write to-day for the "Mattamac Booklet **26 Y**" and patterns of "Matta" Fabric, Ordering Forms, etc., to the Sole Makers of "Mattamac" Stormproofs; or inspect Models at either of the "Mattamac" Showrooms.

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MIDLAND SHOWROOMS AT 134, NEW STREET (OPPOSITE CORPORATION STREET), BIRMINGHAM.

To face end of Text.

Hints on the Complexion

The New Absorption Method

By MILLICENT BROWN

Illustrated by PENRHYN STANLAWS

TWENTY years ago fabulous prices were paid by ladies who submitted themselves to that painful, slow and costly process known as "face peeling." And I think it is true that most of them afterwards "wished they hadn't"! For one thing, you could always tell when a face had been "peeled" in that way. Beauty-Specialists did not give their secret away, but what they actually used was carbolic acid, 90 per cent. The horrible pain and swelling before the tortured skin came off can be imagined. It was called "The Heroic Process," and the woman was certainly something of a heroine to endure it. Fashionable women to-day who wish to look their best follow quite another plan. They get from their chemists a little pure mercolized wax and apply it at night like cold cream, washing it off in the morning. There is no pain or irritation about this method. Nobody knows that the face is being treated. The wax will not harm the most delicate skin. Very gradually the old half-dead cuticle is gently absorbed by the wax, without causing even a temporary irritation. It is quite a popular plan, the face looking years younger afterwards.

A Debutante of Twenty Years Ago.

The sparkling face-bath treatment is another little "secret" which will no doubt be very much appreciated. It keeps the face firm and free from wrinkles, and removes those horrid little blackheads and prevents "shine." It is prepared by dissolving some stymol, obtainable at the chemist's, in a bowl of warm water.

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A Lady has dropped her Suspender.

LADIES — Ask your Draper for "Sphere" Suspenders with the La Supreme Button. The "Sphere La Supreme" will not tear your finest hose.

GENTLEMEN — Ask your Outfitter for "Sphere" Braces and the "Sphere Broadway" Garter. The "Sphere Broadway" Garter for men is a new "Sphere" speciality, made of 1¼" wide "springeasy" elastic. It is most comfortable in wear, and will not cause varicose veins.

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Here are just a few of the many ways "Cherry's" can help you to get ready for the great event of the year—Holidays.

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Costumes Cleaned and Tailor Pressed	7/6
Gent.'s Suits " " "	7/6
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Other articles cleaned at equally reasonable prices. Returned Carriage Paid. Children's Clothes a Speciality.
Over 50 years' experience at your Service.

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John Elkan

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SPLENDID TIMEKEEPER.
Guaranteed for all Climates, Solid Silver Cases, Screw Bezel, Damp and Dust Proof, Superior Lever Movement. Fully Jewelled, £3. 3. 0
With radium dial, 10/6 extra *Post Free.*
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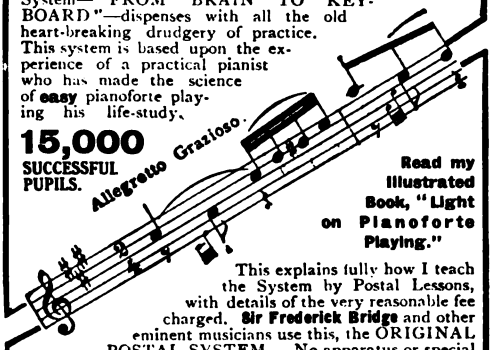
Break away from the old senseless "practising"

DID you ever stop to think how hopelessly out-of-date is the old method of teaching the piano? Constant practising is supposed to be indispensable—but what is it? Merely a short-sighted attempt to bludgeon the mind into insensibility and to get the muscles to act automatically. Breaking away from the old senseless "practising" which has ruined many a budding musician, the Easy System—"FROM BRAIN TO KEYBOARD"—dispenses with all the old heart-breaking drudgery of practice. This system is based upon the experience of a practical pianist who has made the science of **easy** pianoforte playing his life-study.



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Apply for book to-day, but **do not omit** to state whether average or advanced player, or, if a beginner, whether you can or cannot play at sight a simple hymn tune. The book will be sent free of charge and post free.

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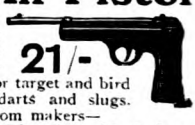

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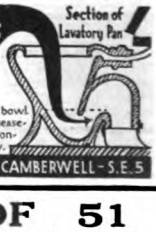

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As filters and blood refiners, the kidneys are so incomparably more efficient than any device ever constructed by man that they will frequently bear unlimited neglect, abuse, and overwork for many years without protest. It is not unusual for a person to reach the age of forty to fifty years without the kidneys causing him any very apparent trouble. After that age, however, he is likely to pay a heavy penalty for his neglect, and find that there is almost no limit to the amount of trouble and pain they can cause. When the kidneys weaken, they soon lose what is called their "selective power," and the cells become damaged by an impeded circulation of the blood or by body-poisons, with the result that the kidneys no longer control the secretion. In Bright's Disease, not only albumen but even blood may be excreted through the bladder. Similarly, in Jaundice, there is excreted bile; in Diabetes, sugar; in cases of Gout and hardened arteries, uric acid and other salts are retained in the blood; in Dropsy, there is infiltration of the tissues—and so on. There is no known cure for some of these kidney diseases after they become far advanced.

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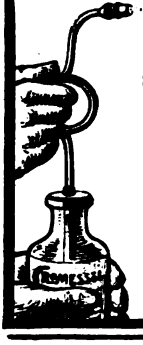

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and be quite sure that it's going to look its very nicest. Isn't it good of me to tell you all this? But I'm so excited, I must tell someone. I've only used it two or three times, and my hair is already much thicker, ever so glossy, and is even developing a decided tendency to curl!

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By A. S. M. HUTCHINSON

(Author of "If Winter Comes—" the most talked-of book of the year.)

Under the title "Royal Days," Mr. A. S. M. Hutchinson, the novelist, has recounted the trials and tribulations of the early part of his career. Never has any living author written such a virile and glowing account of the golden days of youth as this famous novelist's story of his own early days "on the Staff" of the "Royal Magazine." But that the article is reminiscent one might imagine that the story came from the pen of a young, enthusiastic boy just bursting with the joy of beginning a life he knew he was going to love.

Mr. Hutchinson has been writing for about twenty years now, but never for one moment has he lost the youthful enthusiasm which possessed him in these "Royal Days" of which he writes. He says that he was "just beginning," and that "it is in beginning that there is all the fun and all the joy and all the romance that ever is to be found in life."

When you have read the story you have the impression that young Hutchinson must have made a 'corner" of all the fun and all the joy and all the romance that was going in those days.

He was surrounded by men, some of whom he still numbers among his best friends: the late Sir Ernest Shackleton, the explorer; Rudolf Besier, one of our leading dramatists; and others who have since come to the front in the land of letters. But chief among them all must be P. W. Everett, the man who "found" him, gave him his wonderful job "on the Staff," and licked him firmly but painfully into shape, both mentally and physically. "Really," says Hutchinson of him, "I can't believe he followed all his young men with the closeness with which he followed me. The man knew me in all my moods Once he thought I was in love. He was groaning over my manuscript one day, and he suddenly asked me, without the glimmer of a smile, 'Did Miss ——— hold your hand while you wrote this?'"

But it was outside the office that Hutchinson's real troubles began—sometimes he used to spend his week-ends in the Hertfordshire country at the home of his mentor, where almost superhumanly long cycle rides used to form part of the aforesaid training.

"Feats of daring or of labour were always my entertainment down at Everett's," he writes. "They tell me he has given up the bicycling now and keeps a car. One of these days I daresay he will ask me down for a drive, and I know perfectly well what will happen. I shall arrive to find the car broken down at the foot of Elstree Hill, and Everett will greet me in the old cheery way with 'Just push her up to the top, Hutchinson, will you?' Of course," adds Hutchinson mischievously, "he will have to sit inside and steer!"

The foregoing is just a glimpse of the delightfully human article which Hutchinson has written in the August "Royal Magazine," the publication upon which he served his apprenticeship

"It is the most wonderful thing that ever happened."

That is how the story of these Royal Days has been described by one of those of whom Hutchinson writes—a tribute from one who, in those early days, was a junior to Hutchinson, and who therefore—but never mind, the tribute is true and sincere. You will probably say the same thing yourself when you have read the article, and then, no doubt, you'll tell all your friends about it. It's in the August "Royal Magazine," now on sale with **16 extra pages, same price, 1/-.**

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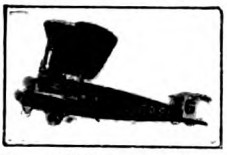

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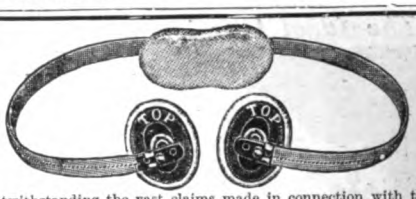

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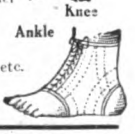

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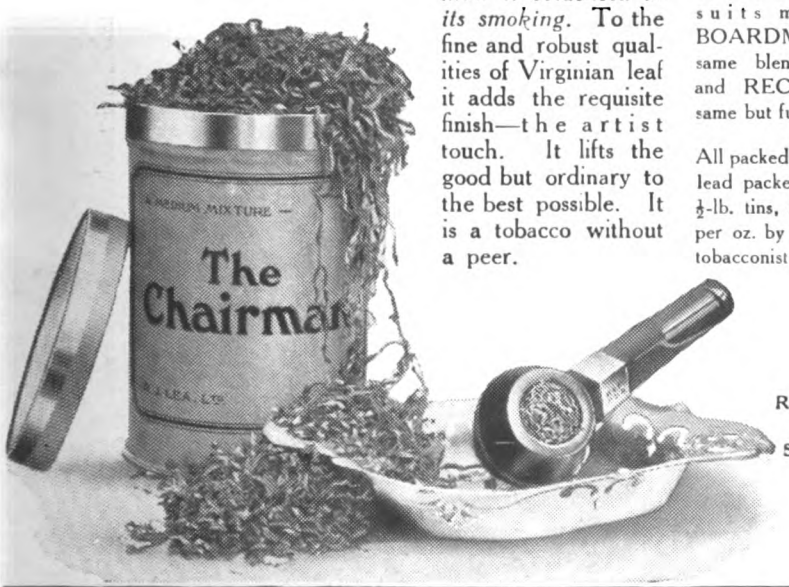

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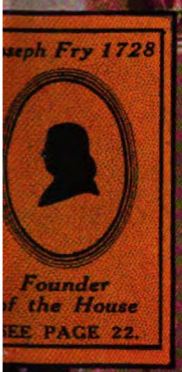

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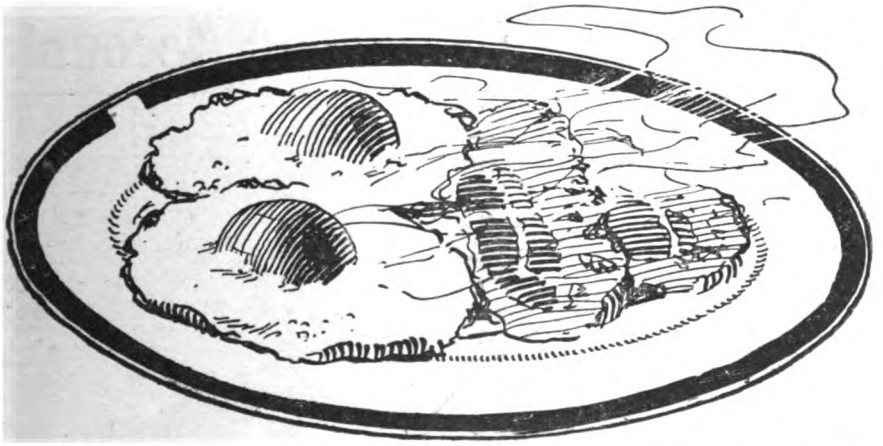

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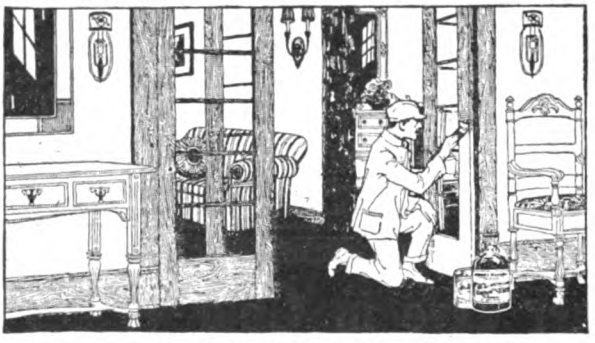

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Oval Tins: 1-lb. net, 1/1; ½-lb. net, 9d. Grocers everywhere

Tyne Brand Products (Dept. W21), 329, High Holborn, London, W.C.1

Proprietors: Shields Ice and Cold Storage Co., Ltd., North Shields.

Export Sales Office: 98, Gt. Tower Street, London, E.C.3.

To get the most out of your holiday take a Kodak

Unless you are different from most of us, you have a special affection for one particular place you have visited at some time or another. Something about it cast a spell over you directly you got there—you felt at home and knew that you had, as it were, "found a friend." You have often longed to see the old place again—and now that your holiday has come round once more you are going to be there for a whole fortnight! But *this* time you are taking a Kodak and intend to bring back to the work-a-day world your own pictures of the quaint old streets and the simple, unhurried country life—to capture, in your Kodak the peace and sunshine of your happy holiday.

All Kodaks and Brownies have been reduced in price. Here are two popular models.

No. 1 Autographic Kodak Junior, fitted with Meniscus Achromatic Lens and Ball Bearing Shutter. Takes pictures 3¼ × 2¼. Price £3 - 0 - 0.

Vest Pocket Autographic Kodak, fitted with Meniscus Achromatic Lens, fits the waistcoat pocket and takes pictures 2½×1⅝. Price 35/-.

Kodak Ltd., Kingsway, London, W.C. 2.

An Essential Part of Your Dress.

A Necklet of

Ciro Pearls

Like Oriental Pearls, Ciro Pearls are chosen for their exquisite beauty, and as the finish to a lady's toilet. Though one costs a princely sum and the other comparatively little, experts have difficulty in telling them apart. The best dressed women that the world boasts you will find are wearing Ciro Pearls or real pearls.

THE EDITOR OF "TRUTH" SAYS:

"The expert has again and again been misled into thinking that Ciro Pearls are the product of the oyster, and not of the laboratory. This is why nine people out of ten acknowledge Ciro Pearls as the most marvellous reproductions of Oriental Pearls in the world. There is no detectable difference to the ordinary eye between the Ciro Pearl and the natural pearl."

If you come to our showrooms your own eyes will convince you, or, if you cannot, avail yourself of

OUR UNIQUE OFFER

On receipt of one guinea, we will send you a necklet of Ciro Pearls 16 inches long, with clasp and case complete, or a ring, brooch, ear-rings, or any other Ciro Pearl jewel in hand-made gold settings. If, after comparing them with real or other artificial pearls, they are not found equal to the former or superior to the latter, return them to us within fifteen days and we will refund your money. Ciro Pearl necklets may also be obtained in any length required. We have a large staff of expert pearl stringers.

Latest descriptive booklet No. 12 sent post free on application.

Ciro Pearls Ltd.

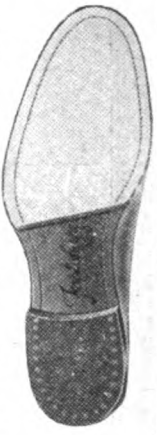
39 Old Bond Street London W.1 Dept 12.

Our Showrooms are on the First Floor—over Lloyds Bank, near Piccadilly.

Double Wear Boots

BARRATTS DOUBLE SOLE IDEA GIVES 100% ADDED LIFE WITH ALL THE STYLE AND SMARTNESS OF LIGHT FOOTWEAR.

The man who values his health and his pocket need no longer wear heavy, bulky footwear. Barratts Double Sole Boots are a smart cut, and just the style to suit the city man. Yet the wear is wonderful. It cuts your boot bills in half, and the boots are the best possible insurance against damp, cold feet and all the ill-health which they cause.



What this Double Clump Sole Does

The extra sole of first-grade English butt sole leather is stitched to the first sole. It is easily detached when worn and may be replaced by a new extra sole. Every boot repairer will quickly realise the immense advantages of this simple method, for it is almost impossible to remove a worn ordinary sole without tearing the welts, cracking the insole, and straining and damaging the uppers. Then the wet gets through the repaired boot and causes rapid decay of the leather. But the wet can never penetrate Barratts Double Sole Boots; the insoles are always kept dry, and the feet also.

Direct By Post

27/6

POST FREE
Postage overseas extra.

Style 1614

Same Boot in Derby Design, 1655, same price.

Fair Wear or FREE Repair.

All Barratts Boots and Shoes are sold on the strict understanding that if you return the goods unsoiled your cash will be immediately returned. All "Footshapes" not giving reasonable wear are repaired free of charge.

Order by Post at Barratts Factory Price.

You couldn't get this quality in the shops for 27/6 *without* the extra sole. Best Selected Black Box Calf Uppers, good substance and cosily soft to wear. All stiffeners and the insole are solid leather. Stylish Balmoral pattern with medium toe. A typical example of the better quality made possible by dealing direct with the manufacturer at the makers' price.

How to Order. State Style 1614 and give usual size worn. Or send your Footshape, a pencil outline of your foot (in sock) resting with normal pressure on paper. Hold pencil upright. Stocked in 24 fittings:—Sizes 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, each in three widths, medium, wide and extra wide. (Size 12, 1/- extra.) Send 27/6 by cheque or money order for home orders. Overseas customers please add postage to home price where C.O.D. is not in operation. Where Cash on Delivery system operates a deposit of 10/- only with order is necessary. Address letter direct to Barratts Factory. Boots sent same day as order is received.

W. BARRATT & Co., LTD.,

20, "Footshape" Boot Works, Northampton.

Send 3d. postage for Barratts 115-page Illustrated Catalogue.

Awaiting the Interview CONFIDENTLY.

(Letter of a former student of the METROPOLITAN COLLEGE—to a friend.)

"Dear Fred

"Despite my expectation that other applicants also had been invited to call, I nevertheless felt surprisingly confident of securing the coveted post—such calm faith in his own powers does a Metropolitan College training give a fellow.

"In fact, I actually caught myself planning (while awaiting the Directors' invitation to 'Come in') how I would bask in the sunshine of the splendid salary offered; so it is a good thing my confidence in the outcome was not misplaced!

"Already I have found my feet firmly in my new sphere, and can see a very cheerful future in store. Every chap who is a square peg in a round hole—or who is so tightly wedged in his niche of humble routine that he cannot expand—ought to know that spare-time study under the Metropolitan College will revolutionise his prospects, without trespassing in the slightest on business duties during the training.

Yours joyously,

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Post the appended COUPON TO-DAY in unsealed envelope—halfpenny stamp.

To METROPOLITAN COLLEGE, ST. ALBANS

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STRAND MAG., September.

PLAYER'S

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CIGARETTES
(MEDIUM STRENGTH)
PURE VIRGINIA
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IN TWO STRENGTHS
MILD AND MEDIUM
1/- per ounce 4/- per ¼lb.

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P865.

Eat more good toffee

Billy Boy Says:

"Fancy putting 'Eat more good toffee'—as though any fellow needs that advice!

"They ought to say, 'Uncle—your nephew needs Mackintosh's'—or 'Dad, take a tin home to Billy to-night.'

"Still, if Dad or Uncle sees this—well, I've been a pretty good boy lately—and a little encouragement . . . !'

* * * * * *

Let your youngsters have more good toffee.
Let them have the very best of all toffees,

Mackintosh's Toffee de Luxe

Egg & Cream-de-Luxe — Café-de-Luxe
Almond Toffee-de-Luxe — Mint-de-Luxe
Cocoanut-de-Luxe — De-Luxe Assortment
Plain Toffee-de-Luxe.

Sold loose by weight at 8d. per ½-lb., and in Baby Oval Tins and Tall Tins at 1/3 each. Junior Oval Tins and Tall Tins at 2/6 each; and in 4-lb. Tins.

You can also buy Plain Toffee-de-Luxe in Seaside Pails for the Kiddies, 1/- each; Popular Week-end Tins, 2/- each; and 5/- Family Tins.

J2

STANWORTHS' "Defiance" REGD UMBRELLAS.

Just Wrap Your OLD UMBRELLA in paper, tie to a board or stick, and post to us to-day with P.O. for **7/6.** By next post it will come back "as good as new," re-covered with our "Defiance" Union and securely packed. Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra. A postcard will bring you our illustrated Catalogue of "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from **5/-** upwards.

J. STANWORTH & CO.,
Royal Umbrella Works,
BLACKBURN.

The "Grey Hair" Problem

Solved by a New Discovery

Colour Restored Gradually, Permanently, Safely

"Nuctone" is an entirely new discovery, which gradually restores the colour to the Hair, without Dyeing.

There is no sudden change from greyness to the natural colour of the Hair, as with Dyeing. The colour comes gradually, but permanently and safely.

Guaranteed not to contain Sulphur, Lead, or any other injurious ingredients. Everyone who has tried "Nuctone" is delighted with the results. If your Hair is going grey, send for a bottle of "Nuctone" to-day. Price **6/6.** By post 6d. extra (inland). "Nuctone" for Dark Hair. "Nuctone" Eclaire for Fair Hair.

Obtainable from all leading Chemists, Hairdressers & Stores, or by post (in'and 6d. extra) from

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Charming Styles IN Knitted Garments.

The Jaeger Range of Knitted Garments contains a large selection of smart Pure Wool Styles, including Golfers, Jumpers, Sweaters, Cardigans and Suits.

For Style and Comfort you will find nothing quite so satisfactory as **"JAEGER."**

Ask for the JAEGER Catalogue.

Jaeger Golfer (Style 418) **61/6**
(Can be worn as shown or to button over.)

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In "Fleecy" Camelhair and Wool.
A Useful Style for Walking or Golf.

JAEGER *Pure Wool*

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Jaeger Agents in every town and throughout the British Empire.

Beauty Without Grit

Without any harm to the teeth

Don't try to whiten teeth with grit that scratches the enamel. That's harmful. Use a soft polishing agent—the Pepsodent agent. Then combat the dingy film twice daily in this new, effective way.

That's what millions of people the world over are doing, largely by dental advice. Look about you and see the beautiful teeth that result.

Clouded by Film

Teeth are clouded by a film. It clings to teeth, gets between the teeth and stays there. Stains enter it, then the film, if left, forms the basis of dingy coats. That's why teeth lose lustre. Film is also the basis of tartar.

Most tooth troubles have a potential origin in film. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth, and the acid may cause decay.

Stays on teeth

Under old methods, much of that film remained on teeth. It made teeth cloudy. Night and day it was unceasing in effect. Many brushed teeth discolour and decay. Tooth troubles have been constantly increasing.

Now dental science, after long research, has found two film combatants. Able authorities have proved their efficiency. Now leading dentists almost the world over are urging their daily use.

A new-type tooth paste has been created, based on five modern requirements. The name is Pepsodent. These two great film combatants are embodied in it for daily application.

Old ways wrong

Pepsodent also aids Nature in two essential ways. It multiplies the starch digestant in the saliva. That is there to digest starch deposits on teeth before they ferment and form acids.

It multiplies the alkalinity of the saliva. That is Nature's neutralizer for the acids as they form.

Every use of Pepsodent thus gives manifold power to Nature's great tooth-protecting agents. Old-time tooth pastes had the opposite effect. They reduced mouth alkalinity, reduced the starch digestant with every application. That was due to their soap and chalk.

We urge you to see and feel these effects, then judge how much they mean.

Send the coupon for a 10-Day Tube. Note how clean the teeth feel after using. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as the film-coats disappear. Watch these delightful effects for a few days and you will always want them. Cut out the coupon now.

MARK
Pepsodent
TRADE

The New-Day Dentifrice

A scientific way to bring five effects which authorities desire. Now advised by leading dentists everywhere.

S. African distributors:
Verrinder, Ltd., P.O. Box 6824, Johannesburg, to whom S.A. residents may send coupon.

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10-DAY TUBE FREE

THE PEPSODENT COMPANY,
(Dept. 131), 40, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C. 1.
Mail 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent to—

Name.....

Address.....

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Give full address. Write plainly.
Only one tube to a family. STRAND MAG./Sept.

42/- "Mattamac" (Reg'd.)

You can't *possibly* get wet in the

Feather-weight **Stormproof.**

Don't risk disappointment with an imitation. Get the *genuine* "Mattamac" Stormproof, which is labelled "Mattamac" beneath the Coat-hanger. *That* is your safeguard.

A "Mattamac" is identical in appearance with the usual five-guinea Weatherproof. In utility, also, it equals its much-more-costly Competitor. It wears as long, weighs one-third and is absolutely Waterproof. Light and compact-folding, Wind, Chill, and Wet proof, a "Mattamac" is the Ideal Coat for Going-away Wear. Take one with you wherever you go.

WEIGHT 19 ozs.

FOLDS INTO THIS SIZE.

Fits the jacket pocket or Attaché Case.

(Reg'd. Trade Mark.)

42/-

For Man, Woman, and Child. Also made for Equestrian, Military, and Sporting Wear.

"Matta" Fabric is exceedingly compact. The coat worn by the 6-ft. man beneath, when folded, just made this handful.

This is an actual photograph of his hand and the "Mattamac" he wears, folded to fit snugly into his jacket pocket or hand bag.

3 OZS. HEAVIER THAN AN UMBRELLA.

Sporting (19 oz.) Model. **42/-**

19 OUNCES WEIGHT 42/-

Belted Model. **47/6**

Belted Models (21½ oz.), **47/6**

Colours:— ***Fawn, Olive, Tan, Grey, Black, and Blue Shades.***

Children's Models for all ages at size prices

Equestrian wide-skirted (22 oz.) Model (Fawn and Khaki only),

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With Belt, (24½ ozs.), **65/-**

Illustrations are direct drawings from photos of stock "Mattamac" Stormproofs costing **42/-**; *Belted Models,* **47/6.**

In 6 shades, 11 Adult Models, and 40 sizes. Also for Children.

MADE FOR EVERY OUTDOOR PURPOSE.

Town and Country unbelted Models, in **Fawn, Olive, Grey, Tan, Black,** and **Blue, 42/-**; Belted Models for Adults, **47/6**; Military Models (unbelted **42/-**, belted **47/6**); wide-skirted Equestrian Models from **59/6**; and Children's Models for all ages at sizeprices. Made entirely from the genuine, hard-wearing, all-weather-proof "Matta" (Reg'd.) Fabric, with wind-cuffs, perpendicular pockets, lined shoulders, Raglan sleeves, roomy "under-arms," and the famous cut of Conduit Street.

"MATTAMAC" ART BOOKLET POST FREE, illustrating Adult and Children's Models. A p.c. brings Booklet and 6 colour Patterns of "Matta" Fabric, or you can safely order now.

SENT OUT ON SEVEN DAYS' FREE APPROVAL. You buy without risk. Send chest measurement **over** waistcoat (Ladies measure over Blouse), height, and remittance, stating colour, and your "Mattamac" will be sent post free in the U.K. (extra abroad). If you are not fully satisfied, you can return it within 7 days of receipt, and get your money back in full. Write for Booklet **"26Z"** and patterns of "Matta" Fabric, Ordering Forms, etc., to the Sole Makers of "Mattamac" Stormproofs; or inspect Models at either of the "Mattamac" Showrooms:—

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NEW MIDLAND SHOWROOMS
134, NEW ST., BIRMINGHAM
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Over a 100 pages Saxone Sorosis Cable Shoes

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Selfsole is a better, cheaper and more convenient way of building up the worn parts of boots and shoes.

A plastic compound — ready for instant use—applied at night in "putty" form, it solidifies and is ready for wear like leather in the morning.

Obtainable from all Domestic Stores, Ironmongers, Leather Sellers, etc.

Selfsole

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"Mends in a Minute"

Send postal order 1/6 for large tube, or 2/9 for two tubes. Colonial postage 6d. per tube extra.

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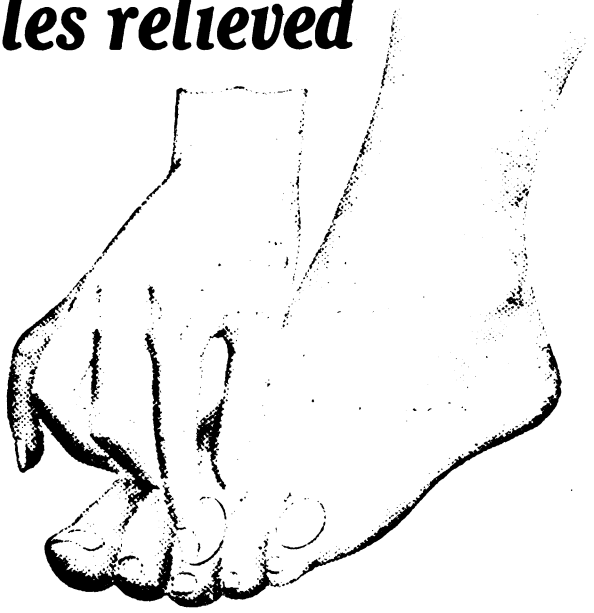
Foot troubles relieved

Dr. Scholl's Zino Pads

remove pressure from corns, callouses, bunions, and any local skin abrasion, and prevent friction. Simple to apply, contain no dangerous medication and require no strapping—will not come off even when bathing. Put one on, the pain is gone.

Price per box - - 1/-



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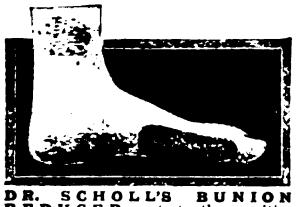

DR. SCHOLL'S BUNION REDUCER protects the sensitive inflamed area from pressure. Reduces the enlargement by absorption, and stops shoe bulging. **Each 2 6**

Tired, aching, and tender feet are symptoms of foot weaknesses that have developed through over-strain of the foot structure. Weak or flat foot, bunions, corns, callouses on the sole, hammer-toes, weak ankles, hot, tender, perspiring feet can be instantly relieved and permanently corrected by

Dr Scholl's
Foot Comfort Appliances

They give perfect foot comfort at once—no painful breaking-in period is necessary. Scholl Appliances completely eliminate the cause of all foot ailments by strengthening the structure and restoring the normal condition of the foot, thus complete correction is assured.

Name of nearest dealer and Dr. Scholl's Booklet free on request.

THE SCHOLL MFG. CO. LTD.,
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DR. SCHOLL'S TOE-FLEX straightens distorted, crooked toes, and corrects bunions by mechanical action. Made from finest soft surgical rubber. Worn comfortably in your ordinary shoes. **Each 2/-**

DR. SCHOLL'S WALK-STRATE HEEL PADS for run-over heels. Preserve shape of shoes and ensure them wearing down evenly. Price per pair, 1/3

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She uses TWO Creams

To protect your complexion from the dangers of outdoor exposure—your skin needs TWO Creams—POND'S VANISHING CREAM (oil-less) during the day, POND'S COLD CREAM (the oil cream) at night.

Sun and dust inflame the skin—Pond's Vanishing Cream keeps it cool, clear, and delicately soft. **Use** it at any time during the day—it vanishes instantly, no greasy surface, no shine.

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The regular use of these TWO Creams will prevent sunburn, freckles, floridness, dullness, and signs of age on the face, neck, and hands. They will protect your skin from the ill-effects of sea-bathing. Pond's Creams never promote the growth of hair.

"TO SOOTHE AND SMOOTH YOUR SKIN"

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2 x 2 yds.	... ... each	**28/6** to **44/9**
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NAPKINS:		
22 x 22 inches	... per doz.	**32/6** to **53/6**

Write for Household Linen List No. 36 L. sent post free on request.

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Manufactured from Pure Wool in the Historic Isle of Skye.

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Motor-cycling was never so enjoyable as to-day, for in addition to the exhilaration of speed, the power to climb, and the ability to go anywhere at any time; there is the means of experiencing these pleasures comfortably.

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doubles the joys of speed and power.

A folder will explain it.

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A host of complications are no proof of excellence in mechanical design.

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have long proved the value of Fox's Puttees for weather protection, comfort & convenience.

The most hygienic leg-covering—giving full weather protection combined with comfort. The spiral fit and non-fray edges ensure ease and smartness — the super-quality material guarantees long wear and good appearance.

	Per pair
Regulation Heavy-weight	9/-
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Ladies' Puttees : With Spats	12/6
(detachable 1/- extra) Without Spats	7/6

Patentees and Sole Manufacturers :
FOX BROS. & CO., Ltd. (Dept. F)
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"F.I.P."—*Fox's Improved Puttees.*

CAUTION.

See that the name 'FOX' is on the metal discs (right and left), attached to every genuine pair of FOX's New Non-Fray Spiral Puttees. (R) (L)

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FOX'S F.I.P. PUTTEES

Made in various colours and shades.

The
TRUSTY TRIUMPH

THE enthusiastic Motor Cyclist who will accept no substitute for Quality will find his many and varied demands entirely met by the TRUSTY TRIUMPH. Its Speed, Power, Reliability, and Liveliness under all conditions are readily acknowledged by those possessing considerable experience of this famous "Single."

Generous Monthly Terms may be arranged if desired.

Full Descriptive Catalogue sent Post Free on request.

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AGENTS EVERYWHERE.

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Tailorcraft at its best is yours wherever you may reside through GROVES & LINDLEY'S Super-tailor Service by Mail. Individual study is given to every garment by cutters specially trained in post-order tailoring, every vital part is hand-worked by man tailors, and the cloths are the best pure wool fabrics produced by Britain's most famous mills.

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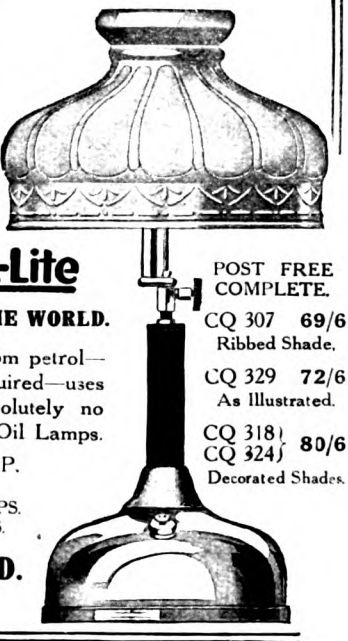

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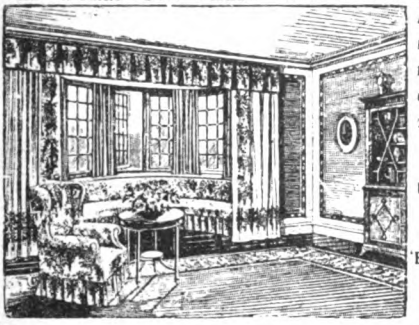

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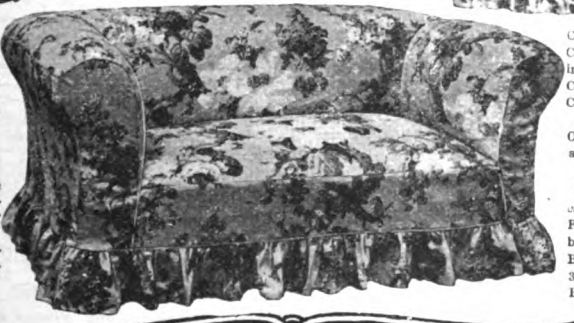

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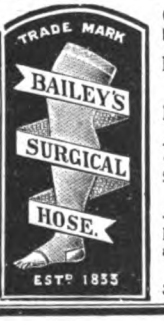

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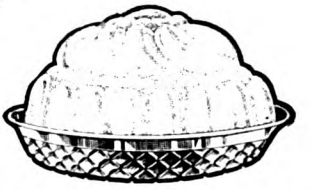

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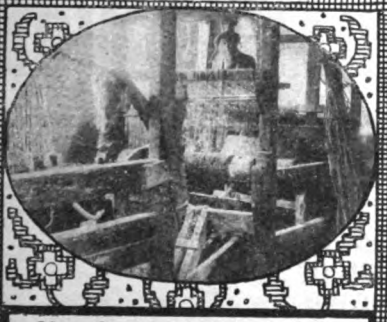

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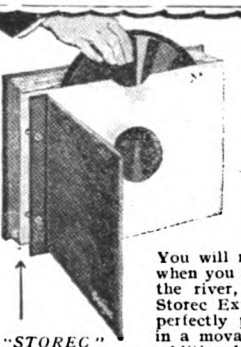

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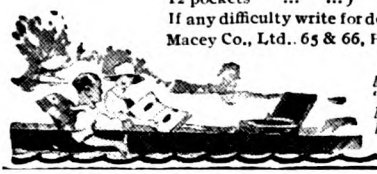

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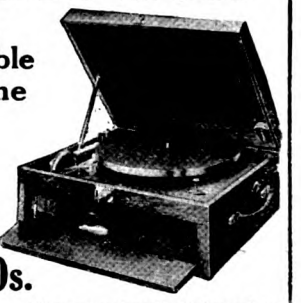

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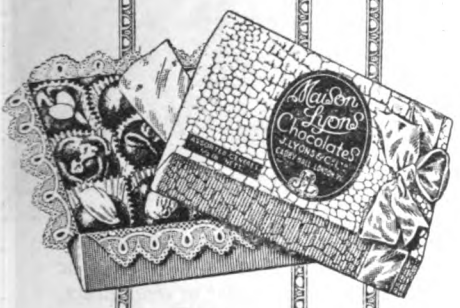

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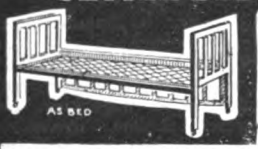

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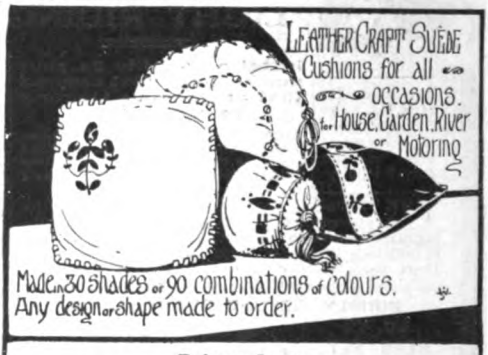

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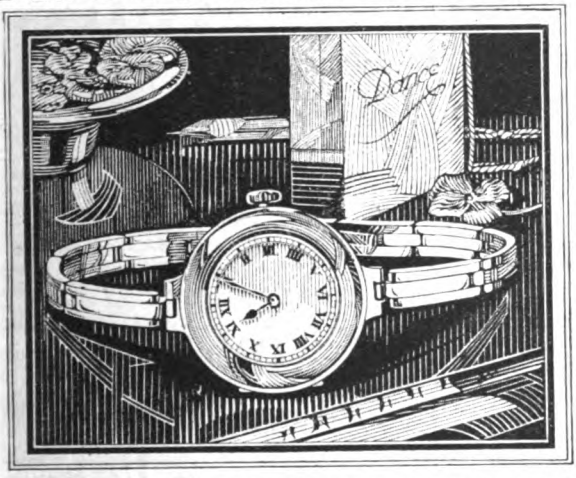

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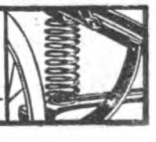

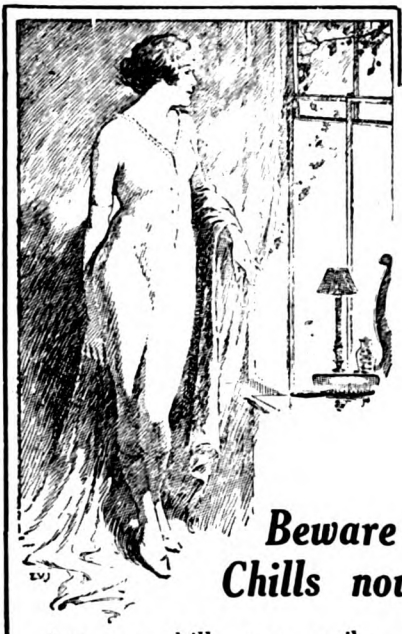

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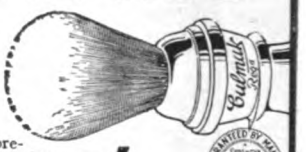

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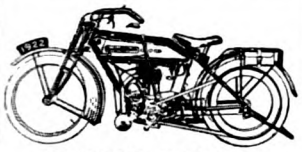

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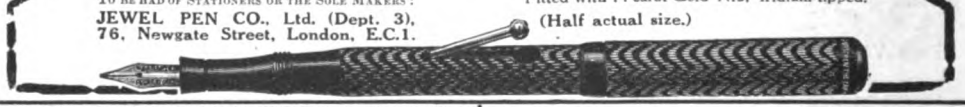

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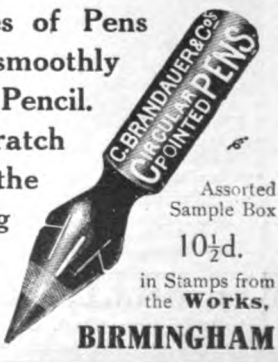

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Contents for September, 1922.

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Frontispiece: With a sudden movement he flung himself at me. I made an ill-directed grab at the blue emerald, missed it, barked my knuckles on the edge of the basin, and saw it swinging back into its vertical position.

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☞ THE STRAND MAGAZINE is printed by the Newnes and Pearson Printing Co., Ltd., N. Kensington, and published monthly by the Proprietors, George Newnes, Ltd., 8 to 11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, England. Subscription price to any part of the world, post free, for one year, 15s. (Canada, 14s.). Registered at the General Post Office for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Entered as Second-class Matter at the New York, N.Y., Post Office. Cases for binding volumes of THE STRAND MAGAZINE may be obtained to order from Booksellers for 3s., or post free for 3s. 4d. direct from the Office. Half-yearly Volumes, 7s. 6d. net.

Sole Agents for Australasia: Gordon & Gotch (A/asia), Ltd. Sole Agents for South Africa: Central News Agency, Ltd. American Agents: The International News Company, 83 and 85, Duane Street, New York.

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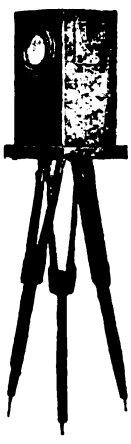

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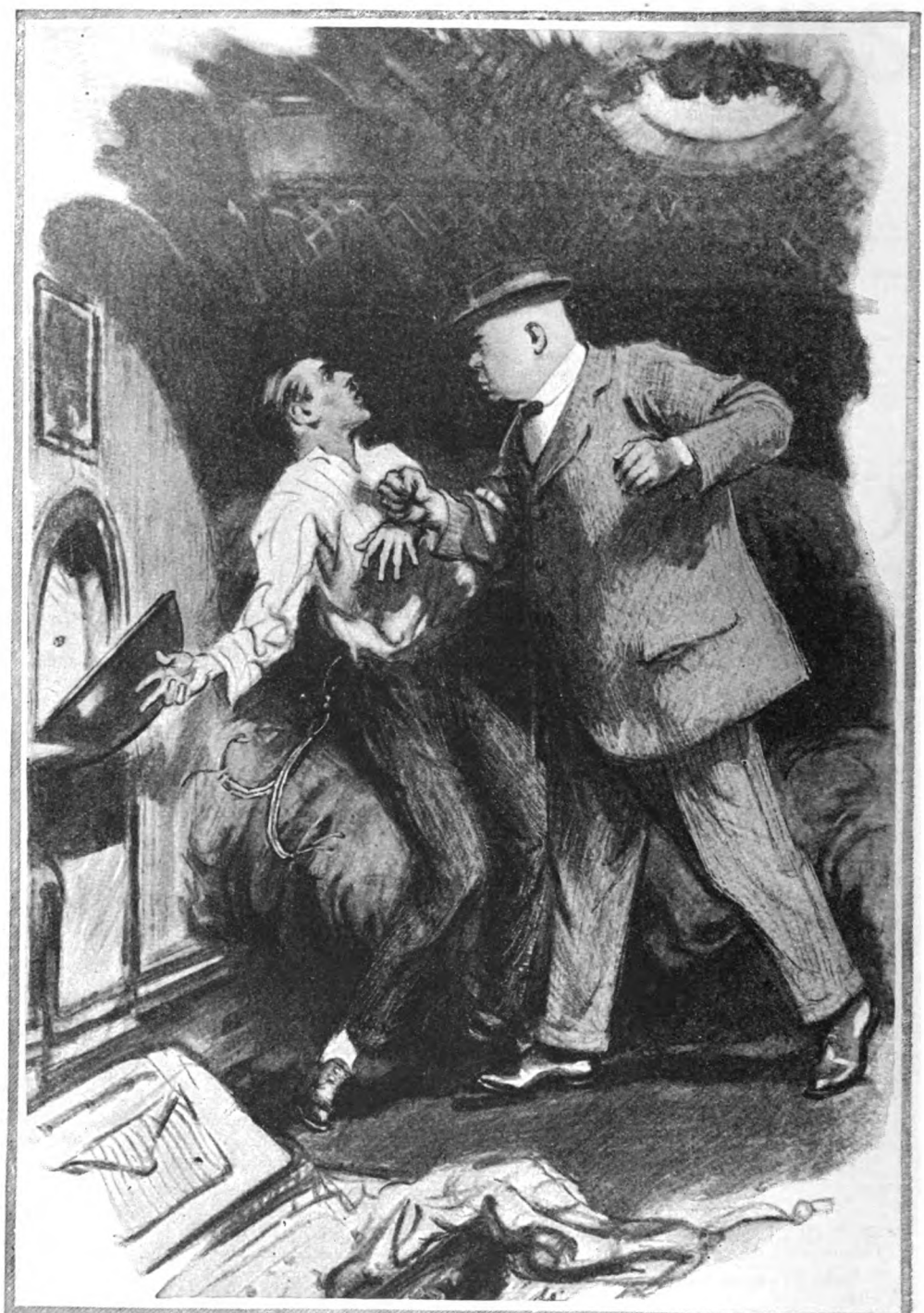


WITH A SUDDEN MOVEMENT HE FLUNG HIMSELF AT ME. I MADE AN ILL-DIRECTED GRAB AT THE BLUE EMERALD, MISSED IT, BARKED MY KNUCKLES ON THE EDGE OF THE BASIN, AND SAW IT SWINGING BACK INTO ITS VERTICAL POSITION.

(*See page* 198.)

GIBSON AND THE BLUE EMERALD

BY

DENIS MACKAIL

ILLUSTRATED BY F. GILLETT R.I.

ONCE every two years the Caviare Club is closed for cleaning and decorating, and for about three weeks members are permitted to accept the hospitality of some rival institution, where they slink about forlornly, exposed to the critical glances of its inhabitants, and feeling rather like new boys during their first term at school. It is a difficult period for all of us, but at its conclusion we are so glad to be back again in our old quarters that it never occurs to us to inquire—as we might otherwise do—why the Caviare looks just as dirty as it did before we went away. In the rapture of regaining our favourite chairs and our own wine-list, this question remains unasked and unanswered. And like a colony of ants who have been disturbed and then replaced, we resume all our former habits exactly as though we had never been interrupted. It becomes, indeed, almost a point of honour to pretend that our banishment has never taken place.

I was a little surprised, therefore, when a few days after our return from the St. John's Club—which, as of course you know, prides itself on its diplomatic and Foreign Office connection—Gibson appeared by my side in the smoking-room, and inquired :—

"Well, how did you get on among the proconsuls ?"

"At the St. John's, do you mean ?" I asked. "Oh, nothing to complain of. But I only went there once. They seemed rather—well, rather fond of talking."

Gibson nodded agreement.

"I didn't go at all," he informed me. "They let me stay here, because I've got one of the bedrooms. But I knew the St. John's set well in the old days. I might even have been a member by now, if things had turned out differently." He smiled faintly, and then added : "But perhaps you didn't realize that I'd ever moved in that kind of circle ?"

"No," I answered. I didn't particularly believe it either, but the time had long passed since I used to trouble myself about Gibson's veracity.

"I did, though," he went on. "I was two years in the Foreign Office before I resigned. In fact, I might well have been there yet, but for the jealousy that I aroused by being given the Order of the Golden Cow when I was still only a Third Secretary."

"The Golden Cow ?" I repeated, interrogatively.

"Yes," said Gibson. "Fourth Class, with the right to remain covered in the presence of everyone below the rank of archdeacon. That's a bit of a rarity in these days, even at the St. John's Club."

I could well believe it, and I said as much.

"Perhaps it might interest you," he suggested, "to hear how it was that I gained such an unusual distinction. What ? Oh, no ! Quite a short story. I'll tell it you at once."

And leaning back in his chair and pressing the tips of his long fingers together, he began immediately.

YOU must excuse me (said Gibson) if in the course of this narrative I find it necessary to suppress or alter the real names of some of the persons and places concerned. Quite apart from the provisions of the Official Secrets Act, there are good reasons why, in the present state of international politics, I should be very careful to avoid giving any clue as to the identity of the very high Personages to whom I shall have to refer. But as regards my own share in the matter I shall be as scrupulous in dispensing with any kind of exaggeration or misrepresentation as—well, as you have always known

me to be. And it is, fortunately, with my own share that I shall have principally to deal.

I was, as I have already told you, a Third Secretary in the Foreign Office in London. For nearly two years I had gone to work in a black coat and a bow tie, had shared a room looking over the quadrangle with two of my colleagues, and for about six hours a day had occupied my time either in writing minutes to other members of the staff or in drafting communications which might eventually serve as the basis of official despatches. It was, on the whole, both a dignified and a peaceful existence, and if about ninety-five per cent. of everything that I wrote found its final resting-place in one of His Majesty's waste-paper baskets, no taxpayer had in those days ever been heard to complain of it.

ONE morning in the late spring, when I had finished feeding the pigeons on my window-sill and was just beginning to turn my mind to the thought of work, a messenger came in with the intimation that Mr. Vere-Tiverton—the head of my branch—would be glad if I would step along the corridor and see him at once.

I found him sitting alone in his room, writing impressively with a quill pen on blue paper, and after I had stood watching him for about ten minutes he turned abruptly to me and said :—

"You speak Transylvanian, Mr. Gibson, I believe ?"

"No," I replied. "I'm afraid not."

Mr. Vere-Tiverton picked up his quill and resumed his writing, and I was just on the point of returning to my room when he suddenly laid it down again and added :—

"Wait."

So I waited. Presently he stopped writing, read and re-read his composition with great care and a quantity of grimaces, and then, folding it over and over about sixteen times, he locked it away in a scarlet despatch-box.

"Now, then," he said, taking off his spectacles and putting on a pair of eye-glasses ; "would you be prepared to start for Spain to-night ?"

This was the first time in my official experience that it had ever been suggested that I should leave England, but as Mr. Vere-Tiverton was now looking out of the window, my surprise passed unnoticed.

"Certainly," I answered after a moment. "Only isn't a King's Messenger going off to——"

He interrupted me by tapping with his keys on the desk.

"Yes, yes," he said. "But the King's Messenger will be known. We must send someone who will not be suspected."

"Oh," I said, feeling rather bewildered.

"This is the position," continued Mr. Vere-Tiverton. "A certain Personage—in fact, I think I may safely say a certain Personage in a Very High Quarter—wishes to convey a gift—an extremely valuable gift—to a Scarcely Less Exalted Recipient, on the occasion of the Recipient's betrothal. The assistance of the Foreign Office has been requested, but we have been warned that the nature of the intended present has become known, and that attempts may consequently be made to intercept it *en route*. In these circumstances it seems to the Under-Secretary and myself that it would be better to entrust its transmission to someone who, while fully fit to assume such a serious responsibility, will be less liable to invite attention or suspicion than one of our ordinary messengers."

"Oh," I said again. And if I hadn't been in the service for nearly two years, I might have added, "Then why not send it by registered post ?" But experience had taught me that where my department was concerned, the longest way round was regarded, not sometimes, but invariably, as representing the shortest way home. So I held my tongue.

Mr. Vere-Tiverton picked up a paper-knife and rattled it against his knuckles.

"By the way," he said, "I suppose you've got a uniform ?"

"A uniform ?" I repeated, wondering what this had got to do with it. "I've got my rig-out in the Yeomanry, if that's what you mean."

"That will do," said Mr. Vere-Tiverton. "His Serene Highness has always been very punctilious on questions of costume, and never more so than since his exile."

"Do you mean that I shall have to wear uniform all the time ?" I asked.

"Not while you're travelling," he explained. "But you had better put it on as soon as you arrive. And now, if everything's quite clear, you'd better take this chit to the Finance Branch and see about getting your ticket."

I took the slip which he handed me and moved towards the door. But half-way there an idea struck me.

"Wouldn't it be as well," I said, coming back to the big desk, "if you told me where it is that I've got to go, and whom it is that I've got to see ?"

Mr. Vere-Tiverton reflected for a moment on this suggestion, and then he rose, looked carefully round the room, and, coming close up to me, whispered something.

"I beg your pardon ?" I said, taking out my handkerchief and drying my ear.

"His Serene Highness Prince Stanislas of Sauerstadt," he repeated. "Just outside San Sebastian."

"Oh, yes," I said. "Quite."

"Here are your instructions," he added, unlocking the red despatch-box and taking out the document which he had been writing when I came in. "I think you had better memorize them carefully, and then destroy them. It wouldn't do for them to be found on you."

"Certainly," I said. "Thank you very much." And then, just as I was leaving, yet another thought came into my head.

"By the way," I asked, stopping by the doorway, "what is it that I've got to take to His Serene Highness?"

"Ah," said Mr. Vere-Tiverton. "Yes. Of course. Just as well you reminded me." He opened a drawer in his writing-desk, and took out a little leather case. "This," he explained; and as he spoke he pressed the catch and opened the lid.

Blinking on its white velvet bed, from where its myriad facets seemed to shine into every corner of the lofty room, I saw a large oval blue stone. Right into its clear heart I peered, where mysterious fires seemed to leap and sparkle, and as I gazed at it in admiration and astonishment, Mr. Vere-Tiverton closed the lid again with a snap.

"It's an emerald," he said.

"Don't you mean a sapphire?" I suggested.

"No," he said, shortly. "It's a blue emerald. So far as I am aware, it is the only blue emerald—at any rate of anything approaching this size—in the whole world. Take it," he added, "and understand that you are in no circumstances to let it out of your sight or keeping for a single instant, until you place it in His Serene Highness's hands. Your success on this mission is of the utmost importance, not only to your career and to the Department which you serve, but also to—well, to a Very High Personage whom it would perhaps be better that I should not name."

I bowed deeply, and put the case in my pocket.

"*Bon voyage*," said Mr. Vere-Tiverton. "It is a pity that you don't speak Transylvanian, but I understand that His Serene Highness converses very fluently in French; and in any event all you will have to do is to give him the case and come straight back. I shall see you next week, then. *A rivederci*."

"*Auf wiedersehen*," I replied, and this time I really did leave him.

I RETURNED to my room and, disregarding my colleagues' request for details of my recent interview, set myself to mastering my written instructions.

They seemed simple enough. All I had to do was to proceed to Biarritz by the ordinary route, which would take me about a day and a half, drive over the frontier to His Serene Highness's headquarters at the Villa Frangipanni, present my visiting-card to the Chamberlain, Count Zybska, hand over the jewel in its case to Prince Stanislas himself, and come home again. I repeated these particulars to myself until I was satisfied that I was word perfect, and then tore the paper two or three times across.

But my room had no fireplace in which I could burn these pieces, and as I didn't like to take the risk of throwing them where someone else might afterwards pick them up, I stuffed them in my pocket, meaning to put them on my own fire when I went home to pack. And so it was that, while crossing the Horse Guards' Parade, I pulled out my handkerchief to blow my nose, and instantly became aware that I was the centre of a kind of miniature blue snow-storm.

"Dash!" I said, stooping down to gather up the scattered fragments of minute paper.

A bulky but good-natured stranger came to my assistance, and between us we had soon retrieved all but a negligible quantity. I'm not sure that I shouldn't have managed it more quickly if I had been by myself, for the stranger was severely handicapped by his size, but I felt it would only look odd if I declined his help. So I thanked him warmly, and in a few more minutes I was back in my rooms. Once more I emptied my pocket of the scraps of paper, threw them on to the fire, and watched them twist and shrivel into ash. Once more I took out the little leather case, opened it, gazed wonderingly at the blue emerald, and then, just as I was going to put it back again, I changed my mind. The jewel itself should return to my pocket, but the case, which had added appreciably and therefore suspiciously to my contour, should travel separately in my dressing-bag. I smiled knowingly to myself as I made this decision, and, having carried it out, went through into my bedroom to begin packing my Yeomanry uniform.

I caught the boat-train at Victoria with plenty of time to spare, had a reasonably good crossing, with no signs that I was attracting any unusual kind of attention, and as soon as I reached Calais made my way to the *wagon-lit* which was to run right through to Biarritz. In accordance with Mr. Vere-Tiverton's directions I had booked a whole compartment to myself, but in spite of the fact that I had paid for and held two tickets, there was a little trouble with the conductor before we started. The whole coach, it appeared, was full, and a monsieur who had seen from the

corridor that I was by myself would be very grateful if I could let him share my section. He was, of course, prepared to pay, and I gathered that he had already shown his ability to tip. But my instructions were definite. I was very sorry, I explained, but I had recently been very ill, and in the circumstances must insist on my right to remain undisturbed.

The conductor tried persuasion. The other monsieur, it seemed, had also been ill. Then he tried being rude. But I stuck to my point, and at last, shrugging his shoulders and spitting unpleasantly through the window of the corridor, he took himself off. I bolted the door after him and prepared to undress.

But first of all, as soon as I had opened the folding wash-basin which was fixed opposite the end of my berth, I took the blue emerald out of my waistcoat pocket and laid it down where I could keep my eye on it until such time as I should be ready to transfer it to the pocket of my pyjamas.

I unlocked my dressing-bag, took out my sponge and tooth-brush, and was perhaps half-way through my preparations for bed, when my attention was attracted by a sound as of someone trying the door of my compartment.

"Who's there?" I said, sharply. And then, as an after-thought, I added: "*Qui est là?*"

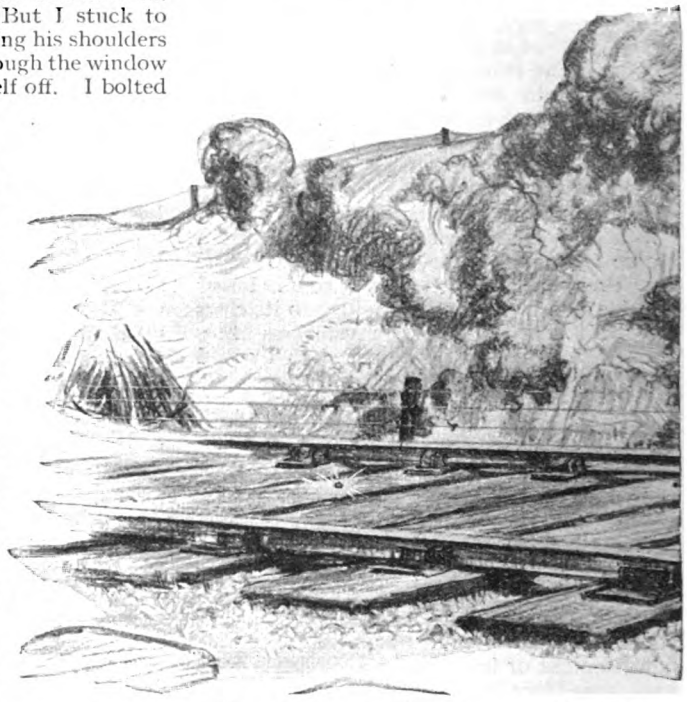
There was no answer.

"What do you want?" I called out. "*Qu'est que c'est que vous voulez?*"

Again there was no answer. The rattling had ceased, but even as I decided that my question had shown the would-be intruder his mistake, I suddenly saw that the bolt was moving slowly back. The next second, and before I could reach it, the door had opened. On the threshold was standing the same bulky-looking man who had helped me to pick up those pieces of paper on the Horse Guards' Parade.

My mind leapt to the explanation like a flash of lightning. He must, while offering me his uninvited assistance, have caught sight of some scrap of writing which had given him a clue to my mission, and from that moment, I supposed, he had never really let me out of his sight. I saw at once that there was no time to snatch up the blue emerald and attempt to conceal it. To do so would only be to indicate its position immediately.

For what felt like many minutes, but must in reality have been a matter of seconds only, we stood watching each other beneath the glare of the electric light. And then, with a sudden movement of his hand from behind his back, he flung himself at me. I raised my left arm to protect myself, made an ill-directed grab at the blue



The emerald hadn't even fallen into a crack. It was

emerald, missed it, barked my knuckles on the edge of the basin, and saw it from the tail of my eye swinging back into its vertical position, and the next instant my wrist had gone down before a violent blow, and I was struggling powerlessly against the overwhelming, choking sweetness of a pad of chloroform.

WHEN I regained consciousness (Gibson continued, after a short but effective pause) I found myself lying across the lower berth. My head was throbbing intolerably, the noise and vibration of the train were insupportable, and I felt that at any moment I might be devastatingly sick. But the thought of the blue emerald gave strength to my stricken limbs. I tottered to the window and flung it up. We seemed to be running steadily through thick wreaths of early-morning mist, and as I drew the fresh air

into my lungs the first feeling of nausea left me. I turned back to examine the inside of my section.

Never in my life have I seen such an appalling vision of disorder and chaos. The contents of my dressing-bag and of the pockets of my clothes—including even my bundle of bank-notes—had been flung broadcast all over the little compartment. The carpet had been dragged from the floor,

perched temptingly on the very middle of a sleeper.

the blankets from the berths, and a series of gashes had been made in the two mattresses. Even the green shade had been torn from the light in the ceiling.

I set painfully to work to repair some of this confusion before summoning such doubtfully sympathetic assistance as might be rendered by the conductor, and, as I did so, a sudden thought struck me.

If my assailant had indeed been in search of the blue emerald, as his contempt for my money would suggest, why should he have caused all this destruction, when all the time it was lying ready to his hand by the side of the wash-basin? Could this, by any miraculous chance, mean that he had overlooked it? I crossed again to the little folding cabinet and pulled it open. The next second a terrifying memory had flashed into my mind. I saw a vision of that last protective movement before unconsciousness had overcome me, and I realized that in missing my real object and knocking up the basin I must have sent the blue emerald slithering down the waste-pipe, and that it was now lying on the permanent way at some unknown point on the two or three hundred miles which separated me from Calais.

I sank back on my berth with a groan. What was the use of having accidentally saved my precious charge from that obese ruffian, if my only clue to its present whereabouts was represented by an indeterminate length of railroad track situated in some unknown portion of Picardy? If only I had even the faintest idea of the time at which the attack had taken place, it might have been some help; but although I knew when the train had been due to leave Calais, I had taken no steps to check its punctuality. I couldn't even recall having looked at a clock since I had left Victoria.

Automatically I raised my aching arm to glance at my wrist-watch, and the next instant my heart seemed to stop beating, as a wild, desperate hope darted into my mind. The glass had been shivered to atoms by the force of that sudden blow; even the case was dented and flattened against my bruised flesh; but the little hands, arrested in their eternal progress, still pointed faithfully to seven minutes past one. Resolutely I disregarded the possibility of failure, while even such a faint chance of success yet remained. I bolted the door again, brushed my hair, resumed my discarded clothes, packed my bag, and sat down to await the train's next stop. I had a bad moment when I found that the little leather jewel-case was no longer anywhere to be seen, but even on this ominous sign I would turn a blind eye as long as it could possibly be done.

And so, about a quarter of an hour later, you must imagine the long train pulling slowly into a sleepy-looking station. The very second that it stopped I dropped my bag through the window, and in another moment I had dodged past the conductor and, seizing the bag from where it had fallen, was tearing up towards the front of the train.

Raising my hat politely, and at the same time ostentatiously fingering a twenty-franc note, I addressed the engine-driver in my best French.

"Pardon me, monsieur," I said, "but would you have the goodness to inform me as precisely as is possible where this train was at seven minutes past one this morning?"

"*Hein?*" said the engine-driver, spitting unsympathetically on the floor of his cab.

I repeated my question.

"*Cinquante francs,*" said the engine-driver this time.

There was no time for argument, and besides, the taxpayer would have to foot the bill. I handed him up his fifty francs.

"*C'est ça,*" said the engine-driver. "*Et le train était sur la voie.*" And he laughed heartily at his own wit.

"You dashed idiot," I thought. "I hope you get your head knocked off in the next tunnel." But aloud I said: "Your pleasantry is very amusing. But am I to report you to my brother-in-law the general manager?"

"By no means," said the engine-driver. "But for myself, I have only directed this machine since Amiens." And with these words he pulled a handle somewhere in his cab, so that all further conversation was made impossible by an agonizing noise of escaping steam.

I REMAINED hidden until the train had left, and then set about discovering the quickest means of returning to Amiens. By three o'clock in the afternoon I had found my way to the office of the *chef de gare* at that station.

"Pardon me, monsieur," I said, "but I had the misfortune to drop from one of your excellent carriages on the Biarritz express last night a photograph of my late wife, which is of inexpressible value to me for reasons of sentiment the most pure. Might I beg you to inform me at what point on your superb line the express found itself at seven minutes past one, the hour of my loss so sad?"

"Monsieur should address himself to the bureau of lost propriety at Paris," replied the station-master.

"Without doubt," I said. "Nevertheless I would desire particularly to assure myself of the exact neighbourhood of my misfortune, in order that I may light a candle, or possibly several candles, in the nearest church, and thereby receive the assistance of the blessed saints in my search."

"For myself," replied the station-master, coldly, "I am an atheist."

"A freemason perhaps?" I suggested.

"And what of it?" he inquired.

"Simply this," I said. "I am myself a Past Grand Master of the Ancient and Honourable Jupiter Lodge, number seven hundred and fifty-six, of Great Britain." And seizing his hand as I spoke, I dug my finger-nails forcibly into the fleshy part of the palm.

"It is enough," said the station-master, wincing. "At seven minutes past one this morning the express for Biarritz was between Rue and Noyelles. I have the time-sheet here in my bureau."

"A thousand thanks," I replied. "Monsieur is of an amiability prodigious." And giving his hand a final grip, I hurried from his office.

At half-past four I had reached Noyelles in yet another train, and, leaving my bag in the cloak-room, I set out quickly along the road to the north. In a few minutes I had left the houses behind me, and at once I clambered over the nearest fence, hurried across a couple of fields, and so reached the permanent way.

Keeping my ears wide open for the sound of any approaching train—for the workings of French railway signals have always been an insoluble mystery to me—I began slowly making my way between the rails of the up-line in the direction of the coast. The sun beat down pitilessly on the metals, but never for a second did I interrupt my crouching progress from sleeper to sleeper. Every inch of the ground was closely examined, and if I had time I could tell you of many unexpected things that I found, but though my hopes were raised again and again by a piece of broken bottle gleaming in the sunlight, of the blue emerald there was still no trace. At the end of an hour I straightened my back and refreshed myself with a cigarette, and then, just as I was preparing to start again, I suddenly saw, lying in the middle of the six-foot way, an object that made my heart leap into my mouth. For though its lining had been wrenched out and its hinges broken, there could be no mistaking that little leather jewel-case.

In the excitement of this discovery I was as nearly as possible run over by a goods train on the down line. But in another minute its last wagon had rattled out of sight round a curve, and, placing the damaged case in my pocket, I resumed my weary walk.

My hopes were now running high. It seemed clear that the thief, enraged by the discovery of the empty casket, had first wreaked his vengeance on the thing itself, and then flung it through the window. Surely, then, unless I had been forestalled, somewhere between this point and the station at Rue I should come on the blue emerald itself, lying lodged in a crevice of the road-bed.

And the astonishing thing is that I did. As a matter of fact it hadn't even fallen into a crack. It was perched temptingly on the very middle of a sleeper, and I first saw it winking at me when I was quite fifty yards away. The very next platelayer to come that way must inevitably have gone off with it, for it was simply asking to be taken. My luck seemed incredible; for a moment I thought I should actually faint with excitement before I could reach it.

But I didn't; and by eight o'clock I had resumed possession of my bag; by ten o'clock I was back at Amiens; and by two o'clock I was sitting up in a crowded second-class compartment, jolting towards Paris. So far as my present trip was concerned, I had finished with such dangerous luxuries as sleeping-cars.

I won't describe the next stage in my exhausting journey. But at last, about noon the following day, after travelling almost unceasingly for over sixty-five hours, I found my seventh train steaming into Biarritz. I waited until everyone else had left the compartment, even until the platform had begun to empty, and then, hot, stiff, and dirty, I climbed down the steps, and went in search of my registered luggage, which had preceded me by twenty-four hours.

And here, as I approached the *douane*, my luck turned again, and I found that a second misfortune had befallen me. Why I hadn't discovered it before, I don't know. But I was certain enough now. My bundle of bank-notes, my visiting-cards, and my booklet of travelling-coupons were all there, safe enough; but of the baggage-check for the box which contained my uniform there was no shadow or sign. Could I have overlooked it when I was gathering up my other property, or had—— I rushed to the custodian of the *douane*, and raised my hat.

"Pardon me, monsieur," I said, "but I have had the misfortune to lose the ticket for a box of mine which arrived last night on the *train de luxe* from Calais. Might I beg to be informed where one should address oneself in such circumstances?"

The *douanier* spat skilfully over his counter.

"A box?" he repeated. "What description of box?"

"A brown box," I explained. "With many labels on it. Also on each end it was marked with my initials, 'H. G.'"

"And of what size?" asked the *douanier*.

"Like this and like that," I said, demonstrating with my hands.

The *douanier* seemed to be weighing his answer carefully, and again I took a bank-note from my pocket and twisted it negligently between my fingers.

"*Ca c'est pour moi*," said the *douanier*, leaning over and seizing it. "As for the box, monsieur should perhaps address himself to the police. A box of such a nature was claimed by a gross gentleman, it is now yesterday."

"You mean he gave up the ticket for it?" I asked.

"Naturally," said the official, and at this he cleared his throat so terrifyingly that I shut my eyes. When I looked again he had gone.

THE explanation was obvious, even if unsatisfactory. Foiled in his attempt to discover the emerald in my compartment or on my person, my assailant must have leapt to the conclusion that I had concealed it in my registered luggage. Barring the uniform, which would be expensive to replace and was, moreover, essential to my mission, the whole loss could well have been covered by ten pounds. And even this my department would in all probability be quite content to pay. But was I to risk international complications by appearing at the distinguished exile's Court in a much-soiled travelling-suit, or ought I to telegraph to London for another uniform and so remain in uneasy possession of the blue emerald for a further indefinite period?

In the end, after much uncomfortable cogitation, I decided to proceed to the Villa Frangipanni and lay the case, in confidence, before Count Zybska. And accordingly, after a bath and a shave at the Carlton, I chartered an automobile in which to complete the last stage of my journey. You may be sure that I scrutinized the chauffeur pretty closely before I started, and that I kept a keen look-out on the road as we bowled along. But nowhere on the ten-mile ride did I detect any indication that I was being watched or followed. I had a nervous moment, it is true, at the frontier, but I was only detained for a couple of minutes, asked a few perfunctory questions, and immediately released.

And so at last, about a quarter to three, my car drew up at the outer gate of His Serene Highness's temporary Court. I handed my card to the porter on duty, and explained my desire for an interview with Count Zybska. The porter seemed to be expecting me.

"The automobile," he said, "must rest here. But if the señor will proceed to the Villa by the path which I shall show him, and present his card to the doorkeeper, he will then be conducted to His Excellency's apartments."

"Ten million thanks," I replied. The

porter scrawled some illegible symbol on the back of my card, returned it to me, pointed out the route with a wealth of southern gesture, saluted, and withdrew again into his lodge. I started at once up the steep and winding path.

I MUST have walked for quite ten minutes through a forest of palms and cactuses, sweltering in the heat and beating the flies off with my handkerchief, before I first caught sight of the white walls of the house itself. And as I had no wish to increase the embarrassment of my visit by arriving in too sodden and exhausted a condition, I paused for a moment to recover my breath and to dust my boots on the grass at the side of the path. For the thousandth time since I had started I made use of the opportunity to feel the little lump in my waistcoat pocket; and then, to make assurance doubly sure, I glanced quickly round and, inserting my finger and thumb, extracted the blue emerald for a final inspection.

Yes, there it was; as dazzling, as fairy-like, and—to me—as odious as ever. I gave it one more polish against the sleeve of my coat, and then, just as I was on the point of putting it back, it seemed suddenly to leap from my hand and, before I could catch it again, it had gone.

I bent down at once to recover it from the grass at my feet, but while my hand was still less than half-way there I heard a hoarse command from the direction of the nearest bush, a scurrying sound behind me, and instantly my two elbows were seized in a vice-like grip, while something that felt like a knee was thrust forcibly into my back. And at the same moment there stepped out from the protection of an *araucaria imbricata* an unwelcome but familiar figure. For although he had now chosen to decorate his bulbous countenance with a small crêpe mask, there could be no mistaking my old friend of the Horse Guards' Parade.

He wasted no time in words, for I was completely at his mercy. His pudgy fingers darted at my pockets, turning out the contents with a machine-like rapidity. I heard a startled gasp as he came on the damaged jewel-case, but the next second he had flung it away and was hard at work again. He snatched at my hat, ran his hands rapidly over it, and tossed it aside; he seized my nose so that I yelped with pain, and took the opportunity to gaze into my mouth. And at each failure his methods became rougher and more objectionable. For days afterwards I was black and blue all over.

And yet, for all the annoyance and even agony of the mauling to which I was being subjected, I was hard put to it to conceal my triumph. Five seconds earlier and nothing could have saved the emerald from being his. I kept my eyes resolutely from the ground, determined to make no sign which could give him the slightest clue to my knowledge of its whereabouts.

It was the brute behind me who put the idea into his head. I heard him muttering something in an unknown tongue, and at once my bulky enemy had hurled himself on all-fours and was tearing over the ground like an ill-conditioned retriever. But, miraculously as it seemed to me, the blue emerald still eluded him. Again and again he passed over the exact spot where I was certain that it had fallen, plucking feverishly at every inch of the ground, but with absolutely no result. I could scarcely believe my eyes.

Suddenly he stopped short and, sitting back on his feet, pulled out a long-barrelled revolver, tastefully mounted in mother-of-pearl.

"The emerald," he panted, directing his weapon at my stomach. "Where is she?"

I looked at him stupidly.

"What emerald?" I asked.

"Assassin!" he shouted, taking deliberate aim at me; and at the same moment the desperate chance on which I had counted came off. The villain behind me had no desire to be spitted on the same bullet which deprived me of my life, and he did exactly what I should have done myself. He let go.

At once I slipped hastily to one side, leapt into the air, and fell heavily on the kneeling gunman. The pistol jerked out of his hand, and as my thumbs sank deep into the rolls of his throat I really thought I had got him. But the odds were too heavily against me. As he choked and gurgled beneath my grip, I saw from the corner of my eye my other assailant creeping nearer and nearer. With a quick movement he had seized the mother-of-pearl pistol, and as he brought the butt-end down on the back of my skull I relapsed, for the second time in the last thirty-six hours, into utter unconsciousness.

I DON'T think (Gibson went on) that I can have been knocked out this time for very long, but when I came round again there was no sign of either of the thieves. My head was aching fit to burst, but I set to at once to begin hunting for the blue emerald. My own explanation of the fat blackguard's failure was that I must have been standing on it the whole time, but after twenty minutes of rapidly-increasing anxiety the appalling fact had to be faced: the emerald simply wasn't there. After all the horrors that I had been through, after travelling unceasingly for nearly three days, after being chloroformed, sandbagged, and reft of my

I sank against a cactus, and as I did so a gorgeously-attired flunkey made his unexpected appearance.

luggage, I had reached the very threshold of success only to lose that infernal stone within half a mile of the Prince's villa. Of course the two thieves must have seen it the second they had laid me out. They would have bolted at once, have left the grounds by climbing one of the walls, and already they were over the frontier or on the sea. I sank against a cactus, groaning aloud, and as I did so a gorgeously-attired flunkey made his unexpected appearance.

"It is the visitor for Count Zybska?" he inquired in Spanish.

"Yes," I said, feebly.

"His Excellency is waiting," said the flunkey. "But perhaps the señor is unwell?"

"No," I said, rudely. "I've only been making a daisy-chain. Take me to His Excellency at once."

He bowed impassively, and struggling to my feet I followed him across the rest of the grounds and through a French window into a large and handsomely-appointed room. The Count rose from a desk at which he was writing, and wrung my hand warmly.

Your Excellency," I said, "you must pardon my abruptness, but there is no time to be lost. I have just been assaulted within five hundred yards of this very house, and though I did all that I could to protect it, the blue emerald has gone. Two men, one extremely stout and the other smelling strongly of garlic, have escaped with it. Apologies and explanations must wait, but let me beg of you to telephone instantly to the mayor, or whoever controls the local police, so that an attempt may be made to arrest them before it is too late."

"Yais," replied Count Zybska, smiling at me amiably. "It ees vairy fine days."

I saw at once that he had failed to apprehend my meaning, so I repeated myself in French.

"*Barfaitmert,*" said the Count, when I had quite finished; and pointing towards a door in the corner, he went through an imbecile pantomime of washing his hands.

"No, no,' I shouted. "Listen to this." And I was just starting off again, this time in German. when the portière at the end of the room rattled on its rings, and there entered a short stocky figure in a green knickerbocker suit with a bald head and, as far as I could judge at a hasty glance, an impediment in one of his eyes.

"Zut!" said Count Zybska, with an appearance of some alarm. "It ees 'Is Serene 'Ighness." And turning to the new arrival, he embarked at once on what I took to be an explanation of my presence.

Prince Stanislas listened stonily, occasionally looking towards me with his less mperfect eye, and when the Count at length ceased, he said, in French:—

'It is enough. But where, then, Mr. Gibson, is your uniform? Do you think to insult us?"

"No, no, your Highness," I exclaimed. "Never would I have appeared in your presence without my uniform. But in the course of my voyage, alas, one has stolen it from me."

"Stolen!" repeated the Prince. "And the emerald, then. Is that also stolen?"

'Your Highness," I said, quaveringly, "I will tell you everything." And I did. In the faint hope of mitigating his severity by explaining all that I had suffered for his sake, I began at the beginning. If I exaggerated a little here and there, then I think it was no more than anyone else would have done. And, to tell the truth, the more I piled it on, the better the story seemed to be going. I described how twelve armed men had burst into my sleeping-compartment in the train, and took all the credit for the ingenious idea of dropping the jewel down the waste-pipe and simultaneously breaking my own watch.

"*C'est magnifique,*" said the Prince, slapping his knickerbockers.

ENCOURAGED by this success, I went on to describe how twenty-four armed men had flung themselves on to me at Biarritz station, and how, though I had wounded most of them, they had succeeded in seizing my baggage. I told of the running fight over the frontier, in which I had been chased by forty-eight armed men in motor-cars. And I was just reaching the point where ninety-six men, all armed to the teeth, had ambushed me in the very grounds of the villa, when His Highness stopped me.

"It is terrible," he said. "It is superb. And you escaped them all?"

I had gone too far to go back.

"All," I replied.

"Monsieur," aid His Serene Highness, "you are a hero from a land of heroes. With ten men such as you, do you think we should be content to remain exiled in this desolate and abominable hovel? Never. But we can and we will reward you. The Order of the Golden Cow (Fourth Class) shall be yours. Kneel, Monsieur Gibson, and receive it from the hands of a Prince who, whatever his misfortunes, can still recognize devotion when he sees it."

The whole situation seemed to have passed out of my control. I prostrated myself with a jerk on the polished parquet, His Serene Highness raised his walking-stick to administer the royal accolade, and—there was a little tinkle on the floor, as from the turned-up end of my despised, civilian trouser-leg the blue emerald rolled out between my knees.

"Your Highness," I said, brokenly, as I snatched it up and held it out to him, "this is the most fortunate moment in my whole life!"

(Another of Gibson's adventures will appear in an early number.)

MISS BRACEGIRDLE DOES HER DUTY

by

STACY AUMONIER

ILLUSTRATED BY S. SEYMOUR LUCAS

"THIS is the room, madame."

"Ah, thank you—thank you."

"Does it appear satisfactory to madame?"

"Oh, yes. Thank you—quite."

"Does madame require anything further?"

"Er—if not too late, may I have a hot bath?"

"*Parfaitement*, madame. The bathroom is at the end of the passage on the left. I will go and prepare it for madame."

"There is one thing more. I have had a very long journey. I am very tired. Will you please see that I am not disturbed in the morning until I ring?"

"Certainly, madame."

Millicent Bracegirdle was speaking the truth—she *was* tired. But then, in the sleepy cathedral town of Easingstoke, from which she came, it was customary for everyone to speak the truth. It was customary, moreover, for everyone to lead simple, self-denying lives—to give up their time to good works and elevating thoughts. One had only to glance at little Miss Bracegirdle to see that in her were epitomized all the virtues and ideals of Easingstoke. Indeed, it was the pursuit of duty which had brought her to the Hôtel de l'Ouest at Bordeaux on this summer's night. She had travelled from Easingstoke to London, then without a break to Dover, crossed that horrid stretch of sea to Calais, entrained for Paris, where of necessity she had to spend four hours—a terrifying experience—and then had come on to Bordeaux, arriving at midnight. The reason of this journey being that someone had to come to Bordeaux to meet her young sister-in-law, who was arriving the next day from South America. The sister-in-law was married to a missionary in Paraguay, but the climate not agreeing with her, she was returning to England. Her dear brother, the dean, would have come himself, but the claims on his time were so extensive, the parishioners would miss him so—it was clearly Millicent's duty to go.

She had never been out of England before, and she had a horror of travel, and an ingrained distrust of foreigners. She spoke a little French, sufficient for the purpose of travel and for obtaining any modest necessities, but not sufficient for carrying on any kind of conversation. She did not deplore this latter fact, for she was of opinion that French people were not the kind of people that one would naturally want to have conversation with; broadly speaking, they were not quite "nice," in spite of their ingratiating manners.

She unpacked her valise, placed her things about the room, tried to thrust back the little stabs of home-sickness as she visualized her darling room at the deanery. How strange and hard and unfriendly seemed these foreign hotel bedrooms! No chintz and lavender and photographs of all the dear family, the dean, the nephews and nieces, the interior of the Cathedral during harvest festival; no samplers and needlework or coloured reproductions of the paintings by Marcus Stone. Oh, dear, how foolish she was! What *did* she expect?

She disrobed, and donned a dressing-gown; then, armed with a sponge-bag and towel, she crept timidly down the passage to the bathroom, after closing her

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bedroom door and turning out the light. The gay bathroom cheered her. She wallowed luxuriously in the hot water, regarding her slim legs with quiet satisfaction. And for the first time since leaving home there came to her a pleasant moment, a sense of enjoyment in her adventure. After all, it *was* rather an adventure, and her life had been peculiarly devoid of it. What queer lives some people must live, travelling about, having experiences! How old was she? Not really old—not by any means. Forty-two? Forty-three? She had shut herself up so. She hardly ever regarded the potentialities of age. As the world went, she was a well-preserved woman for her age. A life of self-abnegation, simple living, healthy walking, and fresh air had kept her younger than these hurrying, pampered, city people.

Love? Yes, once when she was a young girl—he was a schoolmaster, a most estimable, kind gentleman. They were never engaged—not actually, but it was a kind of understood thing. For three years it went on, this pleasant understanding and friendship. He was so gentle, so distinguished and considerate. She would have been happy to have continued in this strain for ever. But there was something lacking—Stephen had curious restless lapses. From the physical aspect of marriage she shrank—yes, even with Stephen, who was gentleness and kindness itself. And then, one day—one day he went away, vanished, and never returned. They told her he had married one of the country girls, a girl who used to work in Mrs. Forbes's dairy—not a very nice girl, she feared, one of those fast, pretty, foolish women. Heigho! Well, she had lived that down, destructive as the blow appeared at the time. One lives everything down in time. There is always work, living for others, faith, duty. At the same time she could sympathize with people who found satisfaction in unusual experiences. There would be lots to tell the dear dean when she wrote to him on the morrow: nearly losing her spectacles on the restaurant-car, the amusing remarks of an American child on the train to Paris, the curious food everywhere, nothing simple and plain; the two English ladies at the hotel in Paris who told her about the death of their uncle—the poor man being taken ill on Friday and dying on Sunday afternoon, just before tea-time; the kindness of the hotel proprietor, who had sat up for her; the prettiness of the chambermaid. Oh, yes, everyone was really very kind. The French people, after all, were very nice. She had seen nothing—nothing but what was quite nice and decorous. There would be lots to tell the dean to-morrow.

HER body glowed with the friction of the towel. She again donned her night attire and her thick woollen dressing-gown. She tidied up the bathroom carefully in exactly the same way she was accustomed to do at home; then once more gripped her sponge-bag and towel, and turning out the light she crept down the passage to her room. Entering the room, she switched on the light and shut the door quickly. Then one of those ridiculous things happened, just the kind of thing you would expect to happen in a foreign hotel. The handle of the door came off in her hand. She ejaculated a quiet "Bother!" and sought to replace it with one hand, the other being occupied with the towel and sponge-bag. In doing this she behaved foolishly, for, thrusting the knob carelessly against the steel pin without properly securing it, she only succeeded in pushing the pin farther into the door, and the knob was not adjusted. She uttered another little "Bother!" and put her sponge-bag and towel down on the floor. She then tried to recover the pin with her left hand, but it had gone in too far.

"How very foolish!" she thought. "I shall have to ring for the chambermaid—and perhaps the poor girl has gone to bed."

She turned and faced the room, and suddenly the awful horror was upon her.

There was a man asleep in her bed!

The sight of that swarthy face on the pillow, with its black tousled hair and heavy moustache, produced in her the most terrible moment of her life. Her heart nearly stopped. For some seconds she could neither think nor scream, and her first thought was:—

"I mustn't scream!"

She stood there like one paralysed, staring at the man's head and the great curved hunch of his body under the clothes. When she began to think she thought very quickly and all her thoughts worked together. The first vivid realization was that it wasn't the man's fault; it was *her* fault. *She was in the wrong room.* It was the man's room. The rooms were identical, but there were all his things about, his clothes thrown carelessly over chairs, his collar and tie on the wardrobe, his great heavy boots and the strange yellow trunk. She must get out—somehow, anyhow. She clutched once more at the door, feverishly driving her finger-nails into the hole where the elusive pin had vanished. She tried to force her fingers in the crack and open the door that way, but it was of no avail. She was to all intents and purposes locked in—locked in a bedroom in a strange hotel, alone with a man—a foreigner—a *Frenchman!*

She must think—she must think! She switched off the light. If the light was off

She turned, and suddenly the awful horror was upon her. *There was a man asleep in her bed!*

he might not wake up. It might give her time to think how to act. It was surprising that he had not awakened. If he *did* wake up, what would he do? How could she explain herself? He wouldn't believe her. No one would believe her. In an English hotel it would be difficult enough, but here, where she wasn't known, where they were all foreigners and consequently antagonistic —merciful heavens!

She *must* get out. Should she wake the man? No, she couldn't do that. He might murder her. He might—oh, it was too awful to contemplate! Should she scream? Ring for the chambermaid? But no; it would be the same thing. People would come rushing. They would find her there in the strange man's bedroom after midnight—she, Millicent Bracegirdle, sister of the Dean of Easingstoke! Easingstoke! Visions of Easingstoke flashed through her alarmed mind. Visions of the news arriving, women whispering around tea-tables: "Have you heard, my dear? Really, no one would have imagined! Her poor brother! He will, of course, have to resign, you know, my dear. Have a little more cream, my love."

Would they put her in prison? She might be in the room for the purpose of stealing or she might be in the room for the purpose of breaking every one of the ten commandments. There was no explaining it away. She was a ruined woman, suddenly and irretrievably, unless she could open the door. The chimney? Should she climb up the chimney? But where would that lead to? And then she thought of the man pulling her down by the legs when she was already smothered in soot. Any moment he might wake up. She thought she heard the chambermaid going along the passage. If she had wanted to scream, she ought to have screamed before. The maid would know she had left the bathroom some minutes ago. Was she going to her room?

AN abrupt and desperate plan formed in her mind. It was already getting on for one o'clock. The man was probably a quite harmless commercial traveller or business man. He would probably get up about seven or eight o'clock, dress quickly, and go out. She would hide under his bed until he went. Only a matter of a few hours. Men don't look under their beds, although she made a religious practice of doing so herself. When he went he would be sure to open the door all right. The handle would be lying on the floor as though it had dropped off in the night. He would probably ring for the chambermaid, or open it with a penknife. Men are so clever at those things. When he had gone she would creep out and steal back to her room, and then there would be no necessity to give any explanation to anyone. But heavens! what an experience! Once under the white frill of that bed, she would be safe till the morning. In daylight nothing seemed so terrifying. With feline precaution she went down on her hands and knees and crept towards the bed. What a lucky thing there was that broad white frill! She lifted it at the foot of the bed and crept under. There was just sufficient depth to take her slim body. The floor was fortunately carpeted all over, but it seemed very close and dusty. Suppose she coughed or sneezed! Anything might happen. Of course, it would be much more difficult to explain her presence under the bed than to explain her presence just inside the door. She held her breath in suspense. No sound came from above, but under the frill it was difficult to hear anything. It was almost more nerve-racking than hearing everything—listening for signs and portents. This temporary escape, in any case, would give her time to regard the predicament detachedly. Up to the present she had not been able to focus the full significance of her action. She had, in truth, lost her head. She had been like a wild animal, consumed with the sole idea of escape—a mouse or a cat would do this kind of thing—take cover and lie low. If only it hadn't all happened *abroad!*

She tried to frame sentences of explanation in French, but French escaped her. And then they talked so rapidly, these people. They didn't listen. The situation was intolerable. Would she be able to endure a night of it? At present she was not altogether uncomfortable, only stuffy and —very, very frightened. But she had to face six or seven or eight hours of it, and perhaps even then discovery in the end! The minutes flashed by as she turned the matter over and over in her head. There was no solution. She began to wish she had screamed or awakened the man. She saw now that that would have been the wisest and most politic thing to do; but she had allowed ten minutes or a quarter of an hour to elapse from the moment when the chambermaid would know that she had left the bathroom. They would want an explanation of what she had been doing in the man's bedroom all that time. Why hadn't she screamed before?

She lifted the frill an inch or two and listened. She thought she heard the man breathing, but she couldn't be sure. In any case, it gave her more air. She became a little bolder, and thrust her face partly through the frill so that she could breathe freely. She tried to steady her nerves by concentrating on the fact that—well, there

it was. She had done it. She must make the best of it. Perhaps it would be all right, after all.

"Of course, I sha'n't sleep," she kept on thinking. "I sha'n't be able to. In any case, it will be safer not to sleep. I must be on the watch."

SHE set her teeth and waited grimly. Now that she had made up her mind to see the thing through in this manner she felt a little calmer. She almost smiled as she reflected that there would certainly be something to tell the dear dean when she wrote to him to-morrow. How would he take it? Of course he would believe it—he had never doubted a single word that she had uttered in her life—but the story would sound so preposterous. In Easingstoke it would be almost impossible to imagine such an experience. She, Millicent Bracegirdle, spending a night under a strange man's bed in a foreign hotel! What would those women think? Fanny Shields and that garrulous old Mrs. Rusbridger? Perhaps—yes, perhaps it would be advisable to tell the dear dean to let the story go no farther. One could hardly expect Mrs. Rusbridger to not make implications—exaggerate. Oh, dear! what were they all doing now? They would all be asleep, everyone in Easingstoke. Her dear brother always retired at 10.15. He would be sleeping calmly and placidly, the sleep of the just—breathing the clear sweet air of Sussex, not this—oh, it *was* stuffy! She felt a great desire to cough. She mustn't do that.

Yes, at 9.30 all the servants were summoned to the library. There was a short service—never more than fifteen minutes; her brother didn't believe in a great deal of ritual—then at ten o'clock cocoa for everyone. At 10.15 bed for everyone. The dear, sweet bedroom, with the narrow white bed, by the side of which she had knelt every night so long as she could remember—even in her dear mother's day—and said her prayers.

Prayers! Yes, that was a curious thing. This was the first night in her life experience when she had not said her prayers on retiring. The situation was certainly very peculiar—exceptional, one might call it. God would understand and forgive such a lapse. And yet, after all, why—what was to prevent her saying her prayers? Of course, she couldn't kneel in the proper devotional attitude, that would be a physical impossibility; nevertheless, perhaps her prayers might be just as efficacious—if they came from the heart.

So little Miss Bracegirdle curved her body and placed her hands in a devout attitude in front of her face, and quite inaudibly murmured her prayers under the strange man's bed.

At the end she added, fervently:—

"Please God protect me from the dangers and perils of this night."

Then she lay silent and inert, strangely soothed by the effort of praying.

It began to get very uncomfortable, stuffy, but at the same time draughty, and the floor was getting harder every minute. She changed her position stealthily and controlled her desire to cough. Her heart was beating rapidly. Over and over again recurred the vivid impression of every little incident and argument that had occurred to her from the moment she left the bathroom. This must, of course, be the room next to her own. So confusing, with perhaps twenty bedrooms all exactly alike on one side of a passage—how was one to remember whether one's number was one hundred and fifteen or one hundred and sixteen? Her mind began to wander idly off into her schooldays. She was always very bad at figures. She disliked Euclid and all these subjects about angles and equations—so unimportant, not leading anywhere. History she liked, and botany, and reading about strange foreign lands, although she had always been too timid to visit them. And the lives of great people, *most* fascinating—Oliver Cromwell, Lord Beaconsfield, Lincoln, Grace Darling—*there* was a heroine for you—General Booth, a great, good man, even if a little vulgar. She remembered dear old Miss Trimmings talking about him one afternoon at the vicar of St. Bride's garden-party. She was *so* amusing. She—— *Good heavens!*

Almost unwittingly Millicent Bracegirdle had emitted a violent sneeze!

It was finished! For the second time that night she was conscious of her heart nearly stopping. For the second time that night she was so paralysed with fear that her mentality went to pieces. Now she would hear the man get out of bed. He would walk across to the door, switch on the light, and then lift up the frill. She could almost see that fierce moustachioed face glaring at her and growling something in French. Then he would thrust out an arm and drag her out. And then? O God in Heaven! what then?

"I shall scream before he does it. Perhaps I had better scream now. If he drags me out he will clap his hand over my mouth. Perhaps chloroform——"

But somehow she could not scream. She was too frightened even for that. She lifted the frill and listened. Was he moving stealthily across the carpet? She thought—no, she couldn't be sure. Anything might be happening. He might strike her from above

—with one of those heavy boots, perhaps. Nothing seemed to be happening, but the suspense was intolerable. She realized now that she hadn't the power to endure a night of it. Anything would be better than this —disgrace, imprisonment, even death. She would crawl out, wake the man, and try to explain as best she could.

She would switch on the light, cough, and say: "Monsieur!"

Then he would start up and stare at her.

Then she would say—what should she say?

"*Pardon, monsieur, mais je*—— What on earth was the French for 'I have made a mistake'?

"*J'ai tort. C'est la chambre*—er—incorrect. *Voulez-vous*—er——?"

What was the French for "door-knob," "let me go"?

It didn't matter. She would turn on the light, cough, and trust to luck. If he got out of bed and came towards her, she would scream the hotel down.

THE resolution formed, she crawled deliberately out at the foot of the bed. She scrambled hastily towards the door—a perilous journey. In a few seconds the room was flooded with light. She turned towards the bed, coughed, and cried out boldly:—

"Monsieur!"

Then for the third time that night little Miss Bracegirdle's heart all but stopped. In this case the climax of the horror took longer to develop, but when it was reached it clouded the other two experiences into insignificance.

The man on the bed was dead!

She had never beheld death before, but one does not mistake death.

She stared at him, bewildered, and repeated almost in a whisper:—

"Monsieur! Monsieur!"

Then she tip-toed towards the bed. The hair and moustache looked extraordinarily black in that grey, wax-like setting. The mouth was slightly open, and the face, which in life might have been vicious and sensual, looked incredibly peaceful and far away. It was as though she were regarding the features of a man across some vast passage of time, a being who had always been completely remote from mundane preoccupations.

When the full truth came home to her, little Miss Bracegirdle buried her face in her hands and murmured:—

"Poor fellow—poor fellow!"

For the moment her own position seemed an affair of small consequence. She was in the presence of something greater and more all-pervading. Almost instinctively she knelt by the bed and prayed.

For a few moments she seemed to be possessed by an extraordinary calmness and detachment. The burden of her hotel predicament was a gossamer trouble—a silly, trivial, almost comic episode, something that could be explained away.

But this man—he had lived his life, whatever it was like, and now he was in the presence of his Maker. What kind of man had he been?

Her meditations were broken by an abrupt sound. It was that of a pair of heavy boots being thrown down by the door outside. She started, thinking at first it was someone knocking or trying to get in. She heard the "boots," however, stumping away down the corridor, and the realization stabbed her with the truth of her own position. She mustn't stop there. The necessity to get out was even more urgent.

To be found in a strange man's bedroom in the night is bad enough, but to be found in a dead man's bedroom was even worse. They would accuse her of murder, perhaps. Yes, that would be it—how could she possibly explain to these foreigners? Good God! they would hang her. No, guillotine her—that's what they do in France. They would chop her head off with a great steel knife. Merciful heavens! She envisaged herself standing blindfold, by a priest and an executioner in a red cap, like that man in the Dickens story. What was his name? —Sydney Carton, that was it. And before he went on the scaffold he said:—

"It is a far, far better thing that I do than I have ever done——"

But no, she couldn't say that. It would be a far, far worse thing that she did. What about the dear dean; her sister-in-law arriving alone from Paraguay to-morrow; all her dear people and friends in Easingstoke; her darling Tony, the large grey tabby-cat? It was her duty not to have her head chopped off if it could possibly be avoided. She could do no good in the room. She could not recall the dead to life. Her only mission was to escape. Any minute people might arrive. The chambermaid, the boots, the manager, the gendarmes. Visions of gendarmes arriving armed with swords and notebooks vitalized her almost exhausted energies. She was a desperate woman. Fortunately now she had not to worry about the light. She sprang once more at the door and tried to force it open with her fingers. The result hurt her and gave her pause. If she was to escape she must *think*, and think intensely. She mustn't do anything rash and silly; she must just think and plan calmly.

She examined the lock carefully. There

was no keyhole, but there was a slip-bolt, so that the hotel guest could lock the door on the inside, but it couldn't be locked on the outside. Oh, why didn't this poor dear dead man lock his door last night? Then this trouble could not have happened. She could see the end of the steel pin. It was about half an inch down the hole. If anyone was passing they must surely notice the handle sticking out too far the other side! She drew a hairpin out of her hair and tried to coax the pin back, but she only succeeded in pushing it a little farther in. She felt the colour leaving her face, and a strange feeling of faintness came over her.

She was fighting for her life; she mustn't give way. She darted round the room like an animal in a trap, her mind alert for the slightest crevice of escape. The window had no balcony, and there was a drop of five storeys to the street below. Dawn was breaking. Soon the activities of the hotel and the city would begin. The thing must be accomplished before then.

SHE went back once more and stared hard at the lock. She stared at the dead man's property, his razors and brushes and writing materials. He appeared to have a lot of writing materials, pens and pencils and rubber and sealing-wax. Sealing-wax!

Necessity is truly the mother of invention. It is in any case quite certain that Millicent Bracegirdle, who had never invented a thing in her life, would never have evolved the ingenious little device she did, had she not believed that her position was utterly desperate. For in the end this is what she did. She got together a box of matches, a candle, a bar of sealing-wax, and a hairpin. She made a little pool of hot sealing-wax, into which she dipped the end of the hairpin. Collecting a small blob on the end of it, she thrust it into the hole, and let it adhere to the end of the steel pin. At the seventh attempt she got the thing to move.

It took her just an hour and ten minutes to get that steel pin back into the room, and when at length it came far enough through for her to grip it with her finger-nails, she burst into tears through the sheer physical tenseness of the strain. Very, very carefully she pulled it through, and holding it firmly with her left hand she fixed the knob with her right, then slowly turned it.

The door opened!

The temptation to dash out into the corridor and scream with relief was almost irresistible, but she forbore. She listened. She peeped out. No one was about. With beating heart she went out, closing the door inaudibly; she crept like a little mouse to the room next door, stole in, and flung herself on the bed. Immediately she did so, it flashed through her mind that *she had left her sponge-bag and towel in the dead man's room!*

In looking back upon her experience she always considered that that second expedition was the worst of all. She might have let the sponge-bag and towel remain there, only that the towel—she never used hotel towels—had neatly inscribed in the corner "M. B."

With furtive caution she managed to retrace her steps. She re-entered the dead man's room, reclaimed her property, and returned to her own. When the mission was accomplished she was indeed well-nigh spent. She lay on her bed and groaned feebly. At last she fell into a fevered sleep.

It was eleven o'clock when she awoke, and no one had been to disturb her. The sun was shining, and the experiences of the night appeared a dubious nightmare. Surely she had dreamt it all?

With dread still burning in her heart she rang the bell. After a short interval of time the chambermaid appeared. The girl's eyes were bright with some uncontrollable excitement. No, she had not been dreaming. This girl had heard something.

"Will you bring me some tea, please?"

"Certainly, madame."

The maid drew back the curtains and fussed about the room. She was under a pledge of secrecy, but she could contain herself no longer. Suddenly she approached the bed and whispered, excitedly:—

"Oh, madame, I am promised not to tell—but a terrible thing has happened! A man, a dead man, has been found in room one hundred and seventeen—a guest! Please not to say I tell you. But they have all been here—the gendarmes, the doctors, the inspectors. Oh, it is terrible—terrible!"

The little lady in the bed said nothing. There was indeed nothing to say. But Marie Louise Lancret was too full of emotional excitement to spare her.

"But the terrible thing is—— Do you know who he was, madame? They say it is Boldhu, the man wanted for the murder of Jeanne Carreton in the barn at Vincennes. They say he strangled her, and then cut her up in pieces and hid her in two barrels, which he threw into the river. Oh, but he was a bad man, madame, a terrible bad man—and he died in the room next door. Suicide, they think; or was it an attack of the heart? Remorse; some shock, perhaps. Did you say a *café complet*, madame?"

"No, thank you, my dear—just a cup of tea—strong tea."

"*Parfaitement*, madame."

The girl retired, and a little later a waiter entered the room with a tray of tea. She could never get over her surprise at this.

It seemed so—well, indecorous for a man—although only a waiter—to enter a lady's bedroom. There was, no doubt, a great deal in what the dear dean said. They were certainly very peculiar, these French people—they had most peculiar notions. It was not the way they behaved at Easingstoke. She got farther under the sheets, but the waiter appeared quite indifferent to the situation. He put the tray down and retired.

When he had gone, she sat up and sipped her tea, which gradually warmed her. She was glad the sun was shining. She would have to get up soon. They said that her sister-in-law's boat was due to berth at one o'clock. That would give her time to dress comfortably, write to her brother, and then go down to the docks.

Poor man! So he had been a murderer, a man who cut up the bodies of his victims—and she had spent the night in his bedroom! They were certainly a most—how could she describe it?—people. Nevertheless she felt a little glad that at the end she had been there to kneel and pray by his bedside. Probably nobody else had ever done that. It was very difficult to judge people. Something at some time might have gone wrong. He might not have murdered the woman after all. People were often wrongly convicted. She herself. If the police had found her in that room at three o'clock that morning—— It is that which takes place in the heart which counts. One learns and learns. Had she not learnt that one can pray just as effectively lying under a bed as kneeling beside it? Poor man!

SHE washed and dressed herself and walked calmly down to the writing-room. There was no evidence of excitement among the other hotel guests. Probably none of them knew about the tragedy except herself. She went to a writing-table, and after profound meditation wrote as follows:—

My Dear Brother,—

I arrived late last night, after a very pleasant journey. Everyone was very kind and attentive, the manager was sitting up for me. I nearly lost my spectacles in the restaurant-car, but a kind old gentleman found them and returned them to me. There was a most amusing American child on the train. I will tell you about her on my return. The people are very pleasant, but the food is peculiar, nothing plain and wholesome. I am going down to meet Annie at one o'clock. How have you been keeping, my dear? I hope you have not had any further return of the bronchial attacks. Please tell Lizzie that I remembered in the train on the way here that that large stone jar of marmalade that Mrs. Hunt made is behind those empty tins on the top shelf of the cupboard next to the coach-house. I wonder whether Mrs. Buller was able to come to evensong after all? This is a nice hotel, but I think Annie and I will stay at the Grand to-night, as the bedrooms here are rather noisy. Well, my dear, nothing more till I return. Do take care of yourself.

Your loving sister,

MILLICENT.

Yes, she couldn't tell Peter about it, neither in the letter nor when she went back to him. It was her duty not to tell him. It would only distress him: she felt convinced of it. In this curious foreign atmosphere the thing appeared possible, but in Easingstoke the mere recounting of the fantastic situation would be positively indelicate. There was no escaping that broad general fact—she had spent a night in a strange man's bedroom. Whether he was a gentleman or a criminal, even whether he was dead or alive, did not seem to mitigate the jar upon her sensibilities, or, rather, it would not mitigate the jar upon the peculiarly sensitive relationship between her brother and herself. To say that she had been to the bathroom, the knob of the door-handle came off in her hand, she was too frightened to awaken the sleeper or scream, she got under the bed—well, it was all perfectly true. Peter would believe her, but—one simply could not conceive such a situation in Easingstoke deanery. It would create a curious little barrier between them, as though she had been dipped in some mysterious solution which alienated her. It was her duty not to tell.

She put on her hat and went out to post the letter. She distrusted an hotel letter-box. One never knew who handled these letters. It was not a proper official way of treating them. She walked to the head post-office in Bordeaux.

The sun was shining. It was very pleasant walking about amongst these queer, excitable people, so foreign and different looking—and the *cafés* already crowded with chattering men and women; and the flower stalls, and the strange odour of—what was it? salt? brine? charcoal? A military band was playing in the square—very gay and moving. It was all life, and movement, and bustle—thrilling rather.

"I spent a night in a strange man's bedroom."

Little Miss Bracegirdle hunched her shoulders, hummed to herself, and walked faster. She reached the post-office, and found the large metal plate with the slot for letters and R.F. stamped above it. Something official at last! Her face was a

'Oh, madame, I am promised not to tell—but a terrible thing has happened!"

little flushed—was it the warmth of the day, or the contact of movement and life? —as she put her letter into the slot. After posting it she put her hand into the slot and flicked it round to see that there were no foreign contraptions to impede its safe delivery. No, the letter had dropped safely in. She sighed contentedly, and walked off in the direction of the docks to meet her sister-in-law from Paraguay.

H.G.WELLS

on

THE SIX GREATEST MEN IN HISTORY

Photo. Beresford.

An Interview by
BRUCE BARTON

MR. WELLS got up from his seat by the window and came forward pleasantly, a medium-sized man, rather stocky, with the clipped moustache that his photographs have made familiar to all of us.

"I received your letter," he said, cheerfully. "A very interesting letter, Mr. Barton, and in one or two points even amusing. Your second question, for example—now, that's an amusing one. You ask whether it is possible to name the half-dozen outstanding figures of history—which is quite harmless—and then you complicate the thing by adding, 'Would there be a woman among them?'" He laughed. "One's chivalrous instincts would make him want to say 'Yes' to that question," he continued, "but the honest historian must answer 'No.'"

I brought my chair up closer, for he speaks rapidly and in very low tones. He is probably a poor lecturer, and, recognizing that fact, cancelled his American lecture tour. That is one of the evidences of greatness, I imagine—to know your own limitations and stick to the thing you can do best.

"If you don't object, I should like to start with my first question," I said. "Now that you've taken a good look at all the folks who have played this game of life, which is the greatest of all? Which one, in character and influence, has left the most permanent impression on the world?"

There was no hesitation in his reply.

"THE DOMINANT FIGURE IN HISTORY."

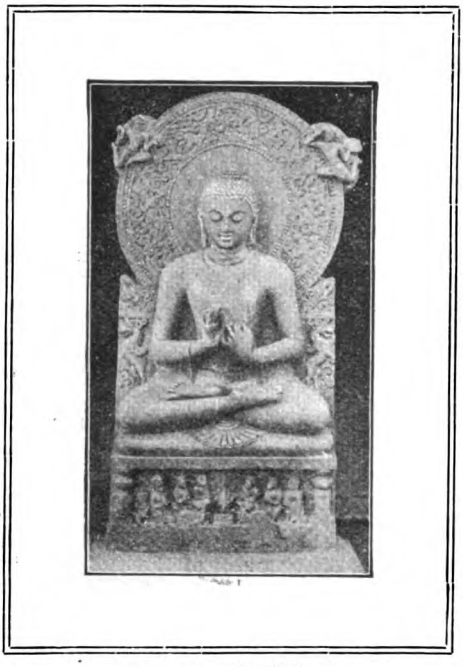
"You probably expect me to answer, Jesus of Nazareth," he said. "There can be no other answer; His is easily the dominant figure in history. I am speaking of Him, of course, as a man, for I conceive that the historian must treat Him as a man, just as the painter must paint Him as a man. We do not know as much about Him as we should like to know. The accounts of His life and work as set down in the four Gospels are sometimes obscure and contradictory; but all four of them agree in giving us a picture of a very definite personality; they carry a conviction of reality. To assume that He never lived, that the accounts of His life are inventions, is more difficult and raises more problems in the path of the historian than to accept the essential elements of the Gospel stories as fact.

"Of course, you and I live in countries where, to millions of men and women, Jesus is more than a man. But the historian must disregard that fact; he must adhere to the evidence which would pass unchallenged if his book were to be read in every nation under the sun. Now, it is interesting and significant—isn't it?—that an historian, setting forth in that spirit, without any theological bias whatever, should find that he simply cannot portray the progress of humanity honestly without giving a foremost place to a penniless teacher from Nazareth. The old-fashioned historians ignored Jesus entirely; they ignored the growth and spread of His teaching, regarding it as something apart from life, something, as it were, that happened only on Sundays. He left no impress on the historical records of His time. Yet, more than nineteen hundred years later, an historian like myself, who does not even call himself a Christian, finds the

picture centring irresistibly around the life and character of this simple, lovable man.

" All sorts of dogma and tradition have been imposed upon His personality, of course; it is the fate of all great religious leaders to be misinterpreted by their followers. But from underneath this mass of the miraculous and incredible, the man himself keeps breaking through. We feel the magnetism that induced men who had seen Him only once to leave their business and follow Him. He filled them with love and courage. Weak and ailing people were heartened by His presence. He spoke with a knowledge and authority that baffled the wise and subtle. But other teachers have done all this. These talents alone would not have given Him the permanent place of power which He occupies; that place is His by virtue of the new and simple and profound doctrine which He brought—the universal, loving Fatherhood of God and the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven.

" It is one of the most revolutionary doctrines that have ever stirred and changed human thought. His followers failed to grasp it; no age has even partially understood its tremendous challenge to the established institutions of mankind. But the world began to be a different world from the day that doctrine was preached; and every step toward wider understanding and tolerance and good will is a step in the direction of universal brotherhood, which He proclaimed.



Gautama Buddha.

THE HISTORIAN'S TEST OF GREATNESS

" So the historian, disregarding the theological significance of His life, writes the name of Jesus of Nazareth at the top of the list of the world's greatest characters. For the historian's test of greatness is not What did He accumulate for himself?' or What did He build up, to tumble down at his death?' Not that at all, but this: Was the world different because He lived? Did He start men to thinking along fresh lines with a vigour and vitality that persisted after Him?' By this test Jesus stands first; and if you ask for another name to write under his, there is Gautama Buddha.

" Here again it is difficult to disentangle the man himself from the mass of accumulated legend. To my mind, the most successful attempt to portray Gautama is that of Rhys Davids, the author whom I quote so fully in 'The Outline of History.' Any such portrayal lays itself open to the charge of representing one man's prejudice and judgment. But as with Jesus, so with Gautama Buddha, you sense the reality: you see clearly a man, simple, devout, lonely, battling for light—a vivid human personality, not a myth.

" He, too, brought a message universal in its character. It knows no limitations of time or of place; many of our best and most modern ideas are in closest harmony with it. All the miseries and discontents of life are due to insatiable selfishness, he taught. Selfishness takes three principal forms, and all are fraught with sorrow: The first is the desire to satisfy the senses, sensuousness; the second is the craving for personal immortality; and the third is the desire for prosperity, worldliness. All these must be overcome—that is to say, a man must be no longer living for himself before he can be serene. And his reward is Nirvana; which is not oblivion, as we have wrongly assumed, but the extinction of futile personal aims, whose going lets serenity into the soul.

" Jesus said, 'Seek ye *first* the Kingdom of God,' and 'Whosoever will save his life shall lose it.' Gautama in different language had called men to self-forgetfulness five hundred years before. There comes to you from reading his life, as from the life of Jesus, the impression of a mind so powerful, so penetrating, that after him things make a fresh start. He stands on one of the corners of history; events hinge upon him; his influence persists."

" Would you class Mohammed and Confucius with these two?" I asked Mr. Wells.

" They founded great religions also."

" We know too little about China to

include Confucius with our half-dozen greatest," he answered. "He was certainly a powerful intellect. As Hirth says, 'There can be no doubt that he had a greater influence on the development of Chinese national character than many emperors taken together.' But his teachings lack the universality of Jesus's teaching and Gautama's; he was great, but until we know China more intimately we cannot say that he was among the greatest. As for Mohammed, he seems to me to have been clearly surpassed by two of his associates: Abu-Bekr, his close friend and supporter, and the Caliph Omar, his successor.

"There is too much of the clay of human weakness mixed with the finer elements in Mohammed's character. He had too many wives and too much trouble with them. Allah was too often called upon to intervene with a special revelation designed to extricate the Prophet from domestic difficulties. He was vain, egotistical, and filled with hot desire. I do not place him among the greatest of human figures, nor am I one of those who find the Koran wholly inspiring and splendid. I own it in two translations and I have made diligent effort to like it, but I am unable to lash myself into a glow of admiration. Mohammed was the immediate cause of calling forth a power much greater than himself—the spirit of Islam. It grew out of the character of the Arab people. It was, and is, something vastly more significant than the man who made himself its spokesman.

"A GREAT NEW THING IN THE WORLD."

"No, I would leave out Mohammed. Instead of his name I would write the name of a wise old Greek, Aristotle. He began a great new thing in the world. Before his time, men had asked questions about themselves and their world; but he set them to classifying and analysing the information which their questions brought forth. He was the tutor of Alexander the Great, whose support and resources made it possible for Aristotle to carry on his studies on a scale never before attempted. At one time he had a thousand men at his disposal, scattered throughout Asia and Greece, collecting material for his natural history. It is reported that he sent assistants into far-away Egypt to study the Nile and to chart its habit of overflowing its banks. Political as well as natural science began with him. The students of the Lyceum under his direction made an analysis of one hundred and fifty-eight political constitutions.

"The death of Alexander and the breaking up of his empire put a too early stop to Aristotle's work, and after him things lapsed for a long time. But the world had been given a taste of the scientific method and never wholly forgot it. Again and again men kept turning back to the great, clear, penetrating intelligence that had set the example. Plato and other philosophers had said: 'Let us take hold of life and remodel it.' Aristotle said: 'First of all, let's get the facts.' That insistence on facts and the rigid analysis of facts, that determination to look the truth in the face, to deal with the world as it is rather than as we might wish it to be, was a big new step in human progress. As a younger man I was a Platonist; the poetry and fine imaginative power of his philosophy captivated me. But as I began to dig into the cause of things in preparation for 'The Outline,' I became convinced that Aristotle's scientific beginnings were a far more significant thing in the processes of history. He was the founder of the scientific method; and when we stop to consider what humanity owes to the development and achievements of the scientific spirit, I think we must agree that the name of Aristotle must have a place on our honour roll."

"Aristotle the teacher goes on the roll," I suggested, "and Alexander the Great stays off. Is that correct?"

"Unquestionably."

"And that holds for Cæsar and Napoleon, too, doesn't it?"

THE CLAIMS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT—

"I have gone to some pains to make my position clear on those three gentlemen in 'The Outline,'" he answered with a chuckle. "What were their permanent contributions to humanity—these three who have appropriated to themselves so many of the pages of our histories? Take Alexander first. Inheriting an effective military machine from his father, he conquered Persia and remained in undisputed possession of that vast empire for six years. What did he create? Historians have said that he Hellenized the East. But Babylonia and Egypt swarmed with Greeks before his time; he was not the cause but a part of the Hellenization. For a time the whole world from the Adriatic to the Indus was under one rule, and that unification had been his father's dream. But what did Alexander do to make the unification permanent? He built no roads, established no secure sea communications, gave no thought, apparently, to institutions of education.

"He did one thing that historians have held up as indicating a vision of a melting together of racial traditions. He held a

great marriage feast at which he and ninety of his generals were married to Persian brides; at the same time several thousand of his soldiers who had married the daughters of Asia were showered with gifts. This wholesale wedding may or may not have been part of a vague plan of world unity. If it was, it is about all the evidence of that plan that we know.

"As his power increased, his arrogance and violence grew with it. He drank hard and murdered ruthlessly. After a protracted drinking bout in Babylon a sudden fever came on him, and he died at the age of thirty-three. Almost immediately his empire began to break up. One custom remained to remind men of him. Previously most men had worn beards. But so great was Alexander's personal vanity that he would not let his face be covered. He shaved, and so set a fashion in Greece and Italy which lasted many centuries. A good fashion, perhaps, but not a very significant contribution to the race.

Aristotle.

CÆSAR—

"As with Alexander, so with Cæsar. Here, again, historians have claimed to discover evidence of marvellous world policies. But what are the facts? There can be little doubt that he was a dissolute and extravagant young man. And in middle age, at the crest of his power, when he might have done so much for the world if he actually possessed the vision ascribed to him, he spent the better part of a year in Egypt feasting and entertaining himself with the lovely Cleopatra. He was fifty-four when the affair began. Surely that year in Egypt seems to reveal the elderly sensualist, or sentimentalist, rather than the master ruler of men."

AND NAPOLEON.

"And Napoleon——"

A copy of "The Outline" was on the table. Mr. Wells opened it and turned to that passage which is so magnificently at variance with the traditional histories that it is worth quoting again. After relating how France had put herself completely in Bonaparte's hands, it continues: —

"Now surely here was opportunity such as never came to man before. Here was a position in which a man might well bow himself in fear of himself, and search his heart and serve God and man to the utmost. The old order of things was dead or dying; strange new forces drove through the world seeking form and direction; the promise of a world republic and enduring world peace whispered in a multitude of startled minds. Had this man any profundity of vision, and power of creative imagination, had he been accessible to any disinterested ambition, he might have done work for mankind that would have made him the very sun of history. . . . There lacked nothing to the occasion but a noble imagination. And failing that, Napoleon could do no more than strut upon the crest of this great mountain of opportunity like a cockerel on a dung-hill. . . . Until, as Victor Hugo said in his tremendous way, 'God was bored by him . . . !'"

I read the passage and laid the book on the table.

"An American professor made a study of eminent men by measuring the amount of space given to each one in the biographical dictionaries," I suggested. "Napoleon's name led all the rest."

"That is easily explained," Mr. Wells replied. "A biographical dictionary is a record of activities, not a weighing of personalities. A London wine merchant with a list of all his customers and the clubs he had joined might conceivably occupy a very impressive space in a biographical dictionary. But that would not prove that the wine merchant was an impressive character. Neither the wine merchant nor Napoleon belongs to our list. One great monarch does deserve nomination, however; or so it seems to me at least."

"Charlemagne?" I asked.

"No, not Charlemagne. Charlemagne was one of the 'magnificent barbarians,' as I have termed them. Like a number of others, he pursued the futile ambition of

restoring the Roman Empire. That proves that he lacked something," Mr. Wells added, with a smile. "For one of the tests of greatness is a man's capacity to recognize that when a thing is dead it's dead.

A MONARCH WHO "SHINES ALMOST ALONE, A STAR."

"The monarch I have in mind lived long before Charlemagne or even Cæsar. He ruled a vast empire which stretched from Afghanistan to Madras; *and he is the only military monarch on record who abandoned warfare after victory.* After a successful war — his one and only war — he announced that he would henceforth turn from battle and devote himself to the happiness of his people. He organized the digging of wells and the planting of trees for shade. He appointed officers to supervise charitable works. He planted gardens for growing medicinal herbs, and provided for the education of women. He sought to develop in his whole people an understanding of the teachings of Buddha as a guide to successful living. For twenty-eight years he worked sanely and unselfishly for the real needs of men. Among all the thousands of kings, emperors, and majesties, great and little, Asoka shines almost alone, a star. More living men cherish his memory to-day than have ever heard the name of Charlemagne."

King Asoka.

From a Tibetan painted banner.

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I had never even heard of Asoka until I read "The Outline," and I said so to Mr. Wells.

"It's a rather appalling thought that among so many monarchs who lorded it over men only one should get his name written on our list," I continued. "And is there no Prime Minister? No Richelieu, no Talleyrand, no Pitt?"

THE ONE ENGLISHMAN WHO DESERVES A PLACE.

"Oh, no; tney were quite incidental," Mr. Wells replied. "But one Englishman does deserve a place, it seems to me. He was a man who lacked many of the elements of greatness, yet he was very cardinal in human progress; his name was Roger Bacon. We know very little about his life, but his books, hotly phrased and sometimes quite abusive, voiced a passionate insistence upon the need for experiment and of collecting knowledge. 'Experiment, experiment,' he cried again and again; and as a promise of the progress which experiment would make possible, when once men had thrown off the chains of ignorance and authority, he wrote this famous paragraph, which has been often quoted. Remember that it was written more than six hundred years ago, somewhere between 1210 and 1203:—

Roger Bacon.

"'Machines for navigating are possible without rowers, so that great ships suited to river or ocean, guided by one man, may

be borne with greater speed than if they were full of men. Likewise, cars may be made so that without a draught animal they may be moved *cum impetu inestimabili*, as we deem the scythed chariots to have been from which antiquity fought. And flying machines are possible, so that a man may sit in the middle, turning some device by which artificial wings may beat the air in the manner of the flying bird.'

"Thus Roger Bacon, too, set men to thinking along new, fresh lines, and left an influence that has lived for the benefit of all generations. There will be those, of course, who will dispute his right to a place on our roll; some will have candidates whose claims can be urged in very convincing fashion. A man rises out of his age; it is always difficult to determine how much he owes to his contemporaries; how much of what he seemed to be was due to his own innate force, and how much to accident. But in my judgment these five names represent basic contributions to human thought and progress.

Photo. W. S. Campbell.

Abraham Lincoln.

WASHINGTON OR LINCOLN?

"Now, when you come down nearer to our own times and ask for a sixth name to complete the list, the problem is difficult. There is one striking phenomenon in modern history, however. That phenomenon is America. It represents something so new, so tremendous, so full of promise for the future of the world, that it seems as if America ought surely to have the right to nominate at least one member to our list. Shall it be Washington or Lincoln? Without Washington, there would hardly have been a United States; and yet Washington is not the typical American. He was essentially an English gentleman. All his tastes, all his traditions, and many of his associations and friendships ran back to the mother country.

"America might have imported her Washington, full grown, from the old world. She had to grow her own Lincoln.

"He, better than any other, seems to me to embody the essential characteristics of America. He stands for equality of opportunity, for the right and the chance of the child of the humblest home to reach the highest place. His simplicity, his humour, his patience, his deep-abiding optimism, based on the conviction that right will prevail and that things *must* work themselves out—all these seem to typify the best that you have to give. And they are very rich gifts indeed.

"It is interesting and significant to the historian that the Lincoln legend has already grown to such proportions. He has been dead only half a century, yet already he has a secure and permanent place in the affections of men, not only in America, but everywhere. I think we are safe in including Abraham Lincoln in our list of permanently great figures; not merely because of his own greatness, but because of the greatness of the spirit of America, which he, better than any other American, embodies and exemplifies."

A LIST TO STIMULATE WONDER.

Mr. Wells folded up the paper on which my questions were written as if to intimate politely that he had talked long enough. I glanced at the list of six names—Jesus, Buddha, Aristotle, Asoka, Roger Bacon, Lincoln. Surely a list to stimulate wonder, to provoke questionings in a man's mind about the objects for which lives are lived;

yes, and questionings about himself. I thought of the thousands of kings who had erected temples and arches to bear their names—seeking by brick and stone to ensure remembrance; of the emperors who determined to lay hold on immortality while they still lived, by decreeing their own divinity. Not one of them is in the list. No millionaire is there, except perhaps Asoka, who is included not because of what he had but because of what he gave. It seemed a grim sort of joke that these men who *sought* fame with every ounce of their selfish energies should have failed utterly to be remembered, while six simple, very human men should achieve lasting eminence. I recalled Emerson's observation that the mass of men worry themselves into nameless graves, while here and there a great unselfish soul *forgets* itself into immortality.

I quoted the line to Mr. Wells.

"There is truth in that," he answered. "We think of human history as being very long; but it is not. In Ceylon there is a tree which is probably the oldest living thing in the world. It was planted from a cutting of the Bo Tree, the tree under which Buddha had his remarkable spiritual experience, and it has been tended with extraordinary care through the centuries. Its limbs are supported by pillars; and earth has been repeatedly terraced about it so that it could keep sending out fresh roots. How many more generations of men it may look down upon we cannot foretell, but we know how many it already has seen come and go. It was planted in 245 B.C.

"When Cæsar was born the old tree was already old. That is a startling thought—that almost all the years since men began to make dependable records are spanned by the life of a single tree. We are still in the beginnings of things; yet enough centuries have already passed to enable us to see what kind of lives and what sort of influence persist beyond the grave. In writing 'The Outline of History,' where everything had to be compressed, we could find no space for many of the Roman emperors, we could not mention even the names of many of the kings of France and Germany and Great Britain. But we gave a good many lines to a poor monk named Luther and to two other very humble, very simple beings, Loyola and St. Francis of Assisi. Why? Because the kings and emperors only *took;* these men *gave;* and by the spirit of their giving they wrought permanent changes in the thought and lives of many millions after them.

WHAT CHARACTERISTICS MAKE FOR REAL HAPPINESS AND PERMANENT INFLUENCE?

"So with the six whose names we have placed in our highest honour list. If the readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE want to discover what characteristics make for real happiness and permanent influence, they can hardly do better than read whatever they can find about the life and works of these six. The characteristics which they embody are the characteristics to which humanity is going to pay more and more tribute in the future. Napoleon had a run of almost twenty years. A Napoleon to-day would hardly run five years; indeed, I think I may say that a bad case of Napoleon, so to speak, would be nipped before he had a chance to get really started. The world has passed the place where it will any longer tolerate—to say nothing of honouring—men who are merely 'getters.'

"A rather striking instance of the change that is taking place everywhere was furnished by a speech given before the head masters of English schools at Leeds some time ago. The late Mr. F. W. Sanderson, head master of the Oundle School, where the sons of some of England's proudest families are educated, was the speaker.

"'We have been training our boys for aristocracy,' he said. 'We shall have to train them now for service.'

"That was spoken only a few months ago, but it is merely an echo of what Jesus spoke nineteen hundred years back, and Buddha, in different language, five hundred years earlier. Our list of great names proves the truth of the injunction that he who would be greatest must win his place and hold it by rendering the best and largest service.

"Without such absorption of one's self in the service of the business the large rewards do not come. We shall see that truth more and more manifest. Therefore we are giving helpful advice, I take it, when we suggest to ambitious men that they make themselves familiar with the lives of the six men we have named. Such reading will give no promise of an easy road to wealth or position, but it will reveal something infinitely more valuable. It will furnish an inspiration to the sort of living that makes for permanent influence through real service. That *is* success."

Next month a number of eminent men will express their opinions on Mr. Wells's views, including:

G. K. CHESTERTON **MAURICE HEWLETT** **GEORGE BERNARD SHAW**
EDWARD CLODD **SIR OLIVER LODGE** **ISRAEL ZANGWILL**
LORD RIDDELL

MUSTARD-POT-HUNTSMAN

by

GILBERT FRANKAU

ILLUSTRATED BY GILBERT HOLIDAY

I.

SINCE most hunting women and all hunting men are liars, and since even the veracity of my friend Mustard-Pot (sometime The Yellow Peril, sometime Butter-pat) may be questioned by modern readers in search of modern realism, I wish to state very clearly at the outset of this, the strangest episode in Mustard-Pot's strange career, that the main outlines of it were given to me one cold kennel-inspecting Sunday afternoon by one of the most matter-of-fact among my acquaintances in the Shires, by one whom I would as soon suspect of skirting as of falsehood, by none other, to wit, than Rutland Romeo.

Now Rutland Romeo, though he is a stallion-hound of no mean lineage, tracing his pedigree back through Rallywood and Reckless to that greatest of all kennel-ancestors, Rambler himself, belies his name—being, in cold fact, so ugly in appearance that when the hunt float first decanted him at the Home Farm of Lomondham Hall, Sam Slooman, Vic. Lomondham's Lincolnshire cowman, to whose care, in company with the handsome Wanderer, he was entrusted for his puppy-walking, declared him a cross between a badger-pied beagle and a blooming bulldog.

Wherefore, in his puppyhood, Romeo's lineage failed to counteract Romeo's looks: it being the well-formed Wanderer and not his bow-legged kennel companion whom Sam Slooman's daughters petted and Sam Slooman's wife over-fed; the straight-limbed Wanderer whom, on sunny summer mornings, Naomi Lomondham permitted to follow her from the rose gardens to the kitchen gardens and from the kitchen gardens to the paddocks. So that, although he was too well-bred for jealousy, the sensitive puppy-soul of Romeo suffered as only sensitive puppy-souls can; and when in the fullness of time, loping aimless and mischievous across far pastures, he found him a friend, a huge upstanding horse-friend, yellow as a buttercup and garrulous as a magpie, he lavished on that horse-friend all the devotion which other happier hounds lavish on human kind.

They became inseparables—the bow-legged badger-pied pup and the straight-limbed saffron gelding; and Sam Slooman, who was imaginative for a cowman, used to swear they talked to each other, "just like Christians," all through those long summer afternoons when Lomondham Vale drowsed like a tired fox-huntress and the rare wheatfields ripened red-gold as Mrs. Monty Perivale's hair against the green of league-long ridge-and-furrow.

Possibly those talks were the Primary Cause of which the following story is only the Secondary Effect.

II.

"I WISH to goodness I hadn't railed those nags to Up-Tollaton," grumbled Sir Victor Plowright Lomondham, Bart., as he peered across the vast dining-room of the Hall to where, between two impossibly-attired seventeenth-century Lomondhams, the broad mullioned window showed a late March landscape, sunless and laced with that driving rain against which not even the most expensive red coat avails the frozen shoulder-blades.

"It's putrid weather," agreed Lady Lomondham, pouring herself another cup from

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the Georgian coffee-pot. "Still, I think I'd better make a one-horse day of it."

"I shouldn't if I were you," said Lomondham, gloomily. "It'll be as cold as charity messing about in Lornham Big Wood."

Naomi Lomondham drained her cup in silence. She, too, felt gloomy. She had the hump, a regular hunting hump. This second season after their marriage had been a rotten one—first frost, then foot-and-mouth disease, and, finally, an influenza epidemic in stables which was still laying up a round dozen of their four-and-twenty horses. "It *might* clear up," she ventured, striving for cheeriness.

"It won't." Her husband filled his cigar-case from the cabinet on the sideboard. "And even if it does, what are you going to ride?"

"Well, there's Selim."

"I'll want Selim for Saturday."

"Ali, then."

"Ali's to be shod this afternoon."

Brightly, Naomi suggested other horses—Nigger Princess, Quicksilver, Silver Glory. Darkly, Lomondham vetoed each and every one. "Just as well give them a rest to-day," decided Sir Victor Lomondham. "Give yourself a rest, too. It'll do you good."

"No, it won't." Naomi's black eyes flashed. "It won't do me a bit of good. I hate missing days at the end of the season."

A knock and a footman announcing, "The car's at the door, Sir Victor," interrupted them; and Victor, who would have preferred hunting through the deluge to a first-class cabin in the ark, cheered up a little. "I'll tell you what you can do if you like," he said, laughing. "You can have Mustard-Pot."

"Can I?" Naomi did not laugh, for Mustard-Pot—though slightly tamer than two years since—had never been backed by female. "Can I really? That *is* kind of you, Victor." And she continued, her husband's over-night decision to hunt thirty miles away from home with a pack whose followers included that particularly hard-thrusting and even harder-flirting lady, Mrs. Monty Perivale, adding acid to the words: "You don't want me to break my neck, do you?"

At which juncture any ordinary husband would have kissed his wife and the domestic breeze subsided. Lomondham's instinct, however, being all for dominance, whether of wives, horses, or tenantry, drove him on a different course. "Dash it all," he thought, remembering his first hunting experience on Mustard-Pot, that seven-mile bolt which had culminated in his engagement to Naomi, "she made me ride the brute once. I'll make her ride him this time." "Of course, if you haven't got the nerve," he said, with the suspicion of a sneer; and at that the domestic breeze blew to a well-mannered gale.

"Are you trying to put the wind up me, Victor?" asked Naomi, her mind visualizing Mrs. Monty's auburn hair and pale complexion.

"Of course not." Lomondham's instinct drove him on. "Of course I'm not trying to put the wind up you. There's nothing the matter with Mustard-Pot these days. All you have to do is to keep hold of his head, ride him well up, and wide of hounds."

"And supposing he bolts with me? Supposing he puts me down?"

"He won't bolt with you, and he's never put anyone down in his life."

Whereupon their eyes clashed; and Lomondham, without another word, marched for the door.

III.

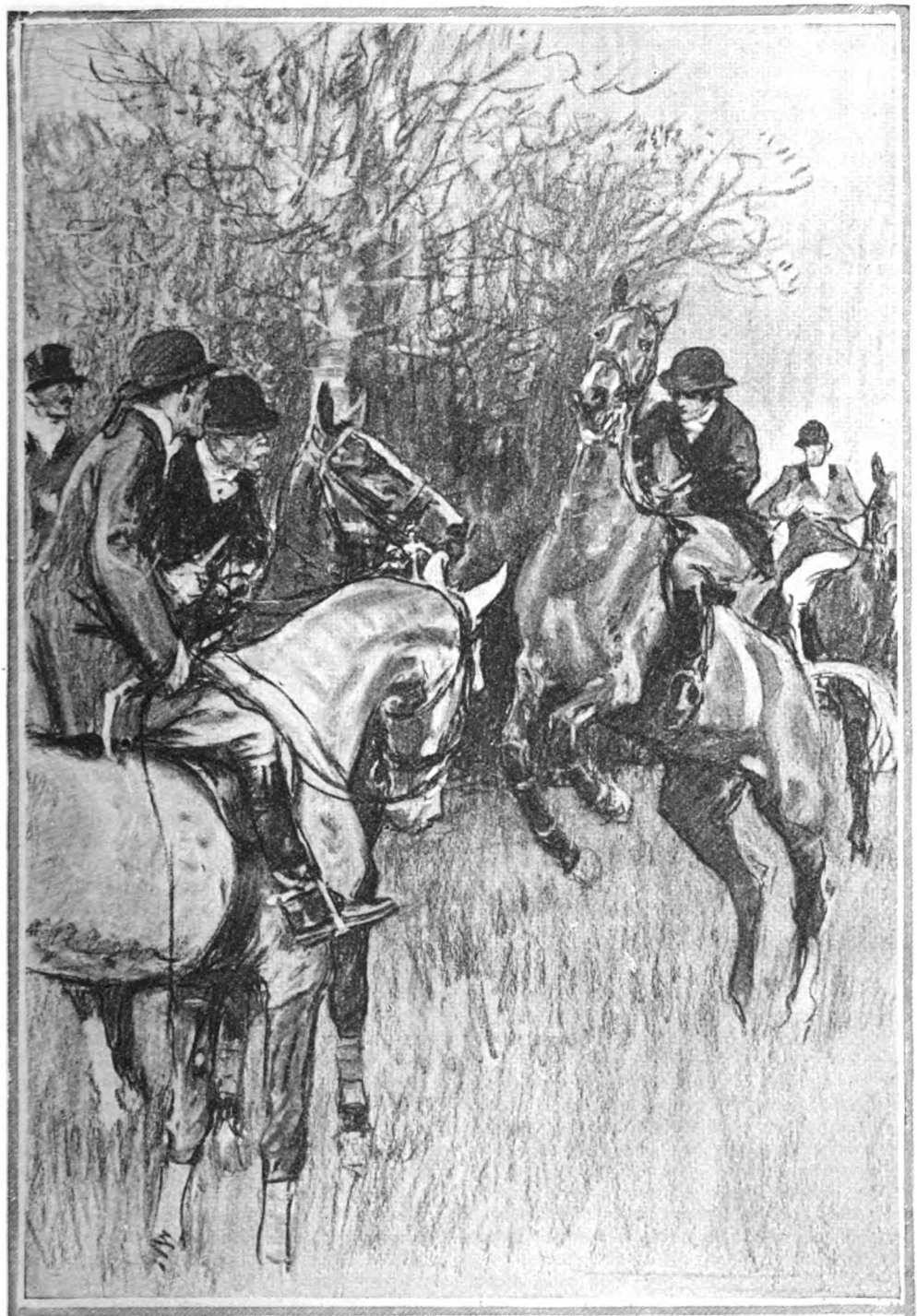
THE breakfast things had been cleared away, the car gone a good half-hour; but Naomi still sat on in the dining-room, alone with her thoughts. "Vic's a brute," she mused; "a domineering, selfish brute. Vic wants all the horses for himself. Vic's getting tired of *me*. He doesn't want *me* to go out with him. He'd rather go out with Mrs. Monty."

Angrily she rose and moved to the window. Angrily she looked out across the terracing downsweep of Lomondham Vale. The rain-clouds were lifting. Vague gleams of brightness peeped through the grey. But the wind had risen. Leafless branches tapped against the mullioned window-pane. "Rotten weather for hunting," thought Naomi, "and we never do get a run from Lornham." Rotten weather would be Mrs. Monty's opportunity. She would flirt—flirt all day long at covert-side with Victor. Probably they'd knock off early, and Vic would drive her home in the Rolls.

Naomi wandered out of the dining-room into the hall. The Chippendale clock on the Tudor mantelpiece pointed to half-past ten. "And I've got to stop at home," she mused. "I've got to stop at home till he comes back, unless—unless I ride Mustard-Pot."

Mustard-Pot! How dared Victor dare her to ride him! Victor couldn't be serious. Mustard-Pot was the hardest puller in all Leicestershire. Naturally, the idea of riding Mustard-Pot put the wind up one. Mustard-Pot would put the wind up anybody Still——

Dubiously Naomi inspected her slim hands, her slim wrists. If that gigantic yellow gelding took it into his head to bolt, no woman's hands, no woman's wrists could hold him. Yet Victor, her own husband,



Mustard-Pot began to fidget, rearing and plunging till it took all Naomi's horsemanship to simmer him down.

had actually suggested—— Surely Victor must be bluffing. This challenge to ride Mustard-Pot was merely Victor's way of ordering her not to go out. Victor *was* a brute. He wanted everybody to go his way. Supposing, though, just supposing that she were to call his bluff——

Naomi's temper rose, and her courage with it. Furiously she remembered Victor's courtship of her. Victor, by riding that very horse, had frightened her into confessing her love for him. What was the use of loving Victor? Victor would rather be loved by Mrs. Monty. Very well, then.

Vaguely and subconsciously Naomi Lomondham's mind conceived the semblance of a plan. Even as once Victor had frightened her into yielding to him, so now she would frighten Victor, frighten him away from hunting with other women.

"But you may break your neck," said thought.

"Oh, damn my neck!" said Victor's wife.

IV.

DRIVER, the stud-groom, watched the pair as they walked away down the drive—the boyish, almost manly figure completely dwarfed by the enormous yellow horse. "Hope to God he doesn't get one of his mad fits to-day!" panicked Driver, turning back to his veterinary duties.

Naomi, trotting out between the lodge-gates, panicked hardly at all. She was still in the worst temper of her existence—a temper of recklessness.

Gradually, though, as her horse made the high road and broke to an easy canter along the grass at side of it, Naomi's temper passed. The rain had stopped, but the sky was darker than ever. "Mustard-Pot's on his best behaviour," she thought. And Mustard-Pot cantered on, easily as a child's pony, his steady hoofs pashing the shallow mud-pools, his steady ears forward, and his eyes bright as brown stars. "I wonder if Romeo's out to-day," thought the yellow gelding, slowing to a perfect hack pace along the grassless macadam.

So they came, a quarter of an hour past time, to Lovers' Clearing. Here a small field, some thirty all told, intimates every one, greeted her with gay "Good mornings" and, greeting, stared.

"Oh, curse! Here's Mustard-Pot," muttered the master, whom only Vic's two-hundred-guinea subscription prevented from forbidding our yellow gelding the chase.

"Damned if I'd let *my* wife ride that brute," muttered Young Tom Cork, who was rising forty-five, to Old Tom Cork, who was just off seventy.

"Victor's at Up-Tollaton. The chances are he don't know anything about it," muttered back Old Tom; and "My whiskers! What a prad!" he went on muttering, as Mustard-Pot began to fidget, rearing and plunging till it took all Naomi's horsemanship to simmer him down.

"Steady!" muttered Naomi. "Steady, old thing!" And miraculously Mustard-Pot steadied himself, steadied himself so well that, for the best part of an hour, a whole fruitless hour during which the invisible pack, as is its habit on Lornham Big Wood days, bustled invisible foxes between ride and ride, he gave a bare hundred per cent. more trouble than a well-trained hunter should.

"He won't bolt with *me*," mused the pleased Naomi, when, at the end of that hour, the disgruntled and foxless field found themselves back in Lovers' Clearing. "It's only a question of hands. Probably Victor hangs on to his curb too much." Mrs. Monty forgotten, she began to laugh at her forthcoming score over her husband.

But Naomi's laughter was short-lived. For suddenly, startlingly, a great red dog-fox with a hound, a clumsy, bow-legged, badger-pied hound giving tongue for dear life close at his brush, popped across the avenue into covert; and at sight of that badger-pied hound, Mustard-Pot, with one forty-horse-power buck which nearly catapulted her over his head, started in fighting, fighting like a mad mastodon, to get away.

Followed despairing seconds when—her arms nearly wrenched from their sockets—she was aware, dimly, of Old Tom Cork's "Whoo-hoop"; of Young Tom Cork's "Tally-ho"; of the Master's "Give 'em a chance, Lady L.; for God's sake give 'em a chance!" of twenty crazy hound-couples streaming by, an inch and an inch under Mustard-Pot's rearing hoofs; and of Jim Rogers, the huntsman, his horn at his lips, cannonading past her up a sodden ride. Then, irresistibly, Mustard-Pot took charge of her.

The ride was a mile of twisting danger, soggy with the yellow mud whereunder flat stones tip-tilted to the pound of the yellow horse's galloping shoes; and as they rounded the last of its curves, Naomi, seeing Jim Rogers's scarlet slow to a cautious trot and disappear among blind alleys of branch and bracken, thought, "I'm done for. I'm done for if I can't stop him."

She sat tight, hoping for the best, expecting the worst. But Mustard-Pot, when he came to those blind alleys, dug both forefeet into the ground and stopped of his own accord—stopped dead as mutton—stopped and stood, his cocked ears listening, listening as only a horse can, to the twanging horn and the crash of hound-voices. Those voices, Mustard-Pot knew, were circling, circling

dubious, here and there among the ungallopable woods. If only he could hear Romeo, his friend Romeo who had found the fox!

Naomi, too, was listening, listening as well as humans can, to that music. She tried to get some hint of which way the quarry might break; but the music dwindled, dwindled away and away. Looking over her shoulder she caught a glimpse of the field. "Back," they signalled, "back"; and as, turning their horses, they pelted off, Naomi heard the pack. The pack, once more in full cry, were making for the south corner of the wood. She tried to turn Mustard-Pot . . . .

But the yellow horse would not turn. He answered neither to rein nor to leg. His ears went back to the backing reins. She tried to coax him with her voice. "Come along," she coaxed. "Come along, Mustard-Pot, old boy."

Useless! She might as well have tried to coax Victor. Victor-like, Mustard-Pot refused to budge. Still he stood; still as a rock, still as the tree-trunks whose branches moaned in the wind above her head. Only his ears moved—cocking, flattening, twitching. Fruitlessly she tugged at the near curb. Fruitlessly she drove her off heel into his flanks. That Mustard-Pot of all horses should jib, frightened her—frightened her more than any bolting. She felt powerless, ridden rather than rider.

Southward, farther and farther went the music. Presently it died—died to an utter silence through which she guessed rather than heard the faint "View-holla" of the First Whip, the faint "Gone away" of Jim Rogers's horn. All the while, do what she would, Mustard-Pot refused to budge. "Damn! Oh, damn!" she thought. "It's a run—and I'm out of it." Then lifting her whip to cut Mustard-Pot on the shoulder, she knew a great amazement.

One hound, one solitary hound, was still hunting in covert. Weirdly she heard him giving tongue. Mustard-Pot's ears twitched and twitched. Closer the hound drew, and closer. Mustard-Pot's muscles flexed to taut steel. His whole body quivered between her thighs. She thought, "I wonder if Mustard-Pot heard him before I did. I wonder if that was why he jibbed."

Simultaneously, horse and rider saw the hound. Bow-legged and badger-pied, still throwing his tongue as though all the pack were at his heels, he came leaping among the bracken. Naomi recognized him for the puppy Sam Slooman had walked last year. She could see that he was hunting a line of his own. It flashed through her mind, "There must have been two foxes. He's still on the first one." Instinctively she called to him. "Yoi-doit, yoi-doit, Romeo, old man."

For a moment the hound looked up from his work and his note changed. It was as though he no longer spoke his fox; almost as though he were speaking in some strange language to the cocked ears of Mustard-Pot. Then his nose dropped to ground and he went mute, mute as the bracken. Then suddenly he began feathering. Then he gave a whimper—a second whimper. Then, still puzzling his line, he loped away from her between the trees.

AND now Mustard-Pot jibbed no longer. Slowly, picking his every pace through the undergrowth, he began to follow Romeo. Mysteriously Naomi was conscious of a link, of a definite link between horse and hound. Mysteriously she knew herself powerless to break that link; powerless to do anything save sit still. The hound quickened, and Mustard-Pot with him. Presently Romeo approached the north edge of the wood. Soon, between the tree-boles, Naomi could see the rotten boundary-fence, and beyond the fence, green fields empty under grey skies. Once more she called to the hound, "Yoi-doit, then, yoi-doit, Romeo." Once more the hound looked up. Once more she heard that eerie cry of his. Then, not dubiously, but full-throated for blood, he threw tongue again and scrambling through the boundary-fence went away like blazes.

Naomi had no time to think, no time to take Mustard-Pot between her knees. Unasked, unsteered, the great horse sprang to a canter and hurtled at his fence. She heard the top rail crack as they went over, heard Romeo's music fifty yards ahead. Mustard-Pot began to gallop. Galloping, she thought, "This is a dream, a dream. This is the sort of thing that couldn't happen." She looked forward at Romeo. Romeo was on a breast-high scent, going like the wind over ground flat as a billiard-table. Romeo was gaining on Mustard-Pot. Gaining and gaining. He came to his second fence, naked timber; and went through it like a streak of pied lightning.

Naomi felt Mustard-Pot stride to speed; felt him balance himself, felt him lift under her as they cleared. Landing, she knew herself still powerless. Between her and the horse was no link, no understanding. His thoughts were not with his rider. His thoughts were with the hound, with the one solitary hound ahead. Once more she thought, "This is a dream, a marvellous, impossible dream."

Yet what a dream! Exhilaration took her by the throat. She whooped as she rode. The great horse quickened and quickened. But the scent was still breast-high; and still Romeo gained on him. Four fields flashed by. Four rails flashed under. To Naomi the whole countryside seemed empty,

empty as some green desert through which she and Mustard-Pot and Romeo and that invisible prey whose flight drew all three of them tore like beings possessed.

Came uglier fences—thorned raspers whose ditches were death-traps. They slowed Romeo, but Mustard-Pot they could not slow. His great hocks drove him—drove him yards and yards beyond the death-traps. Presently he began to gain. Presently horse and hound were almost level. Mustard-Pot of his own accord drew wide a little, easing the pace. Ahead, blurred against its crest of meadow-land, Naomi saw Cobb's Gorse. She realized for the first time that it was raining, a cold rain which stung the cheeks and blinded the eyes. She thought, "Scent'll fail."

But scent did not fail. Straight it led and straight, up the slope, to the Gorse. Mustard-Pot drew level at last: Side by side, horse and hound raced for the crest.

V.

THE ways of a woman, the ways of a horse, the ways of a hound—of these man may know a little. But no man knows the ways of Reynard in his March-madness. Perchance there was a vixen in Cobb's Gorse, some old flame with whom Romeo's quarry tarried flirtatious a while. Perchance he did not find the earths to his liking. Perchance he scorned pursuit by one solitary hound, one solitary horsewoman. Who shall say? Remains as fact only that he waited—waited till Romeo, leaping red-eyed to the fresh taint, jumped almost atop of him at the far edge of Cobb's Gorse; so that it seemed no miracle of speed, no miracle of cunning, could save his brush.

Yet that dog-fox saved it—saved it by fractions of inches, eeling between ridge and furrow as he raced for the north!

Of the three, only Naomi saw him racing. For Mustard-Pot's eyes were on Romeo; and after that one glimpse, Romeo's eyes, as Romeo's nose, were on the ground. Away he went and away; stern straight, hackles up; across ridge-and-furrow that rolled like the sea; under double-oxers, under single rails; over blackthorn and through hornbeam; across ploughlands and across roadways; past rare cottages from whose wash-tubs hoof-deafened women looked up to see a vast saffron steed, foam-flecked and sweat-sodden, striding as never steed strode yet in pursuit of his hareing friend. "'Tis Badger-pie!" thought the women. "Badger-pie and Butter-pat. Butter-pat's bolting again—bolting with Sir Victor's wife."

But Naomi knew that Mustard-Pot was not bolting blindly. Naomi knew that she was safe—safe as any horsewoman might be across a country—unless sheer fatigue dropped her from the saddle.

That first fine exhilaration had long since passed, and her brain, one tense concentration on the ground ahead, was busy with topography. Already they were six good miles from Lornham Big Wood. Already the flat lands lay behind them and the uplands in front. Still the dog-fox held on—held on for his point. He had gained, gained a full three fields on his loud pursuer. But his pursuer, the dog-fox knew, was still linked to him, linked by the taint in the air and the taint on the ground, and the lust for his blood.

He swerved down-wind to the west—swerved for Saxenham Parva over a rain-channelled ridge-and-furrow where even Romeo's nose could scarcely hold the line.

VI.

NAOMI, watching Romeo as Mustard-Pot's slowing hoofs spurted the rain-channels to yellow fountains, could see that the hound was at a loss. Almost she felt glad. Her knees were cold lead under the wet buckskin. Her thighs ached. Her mouth, despite the beat of the rain, was a parched torment. She could feel the sweat pouring down between her breasts, between her shoulder-blades. A mile to the west, she knew red roofs under leafless trees for Saxenham Parva. There was an inn at Saxenham Parva. She needed that inn—needed it desperately in her weariness.

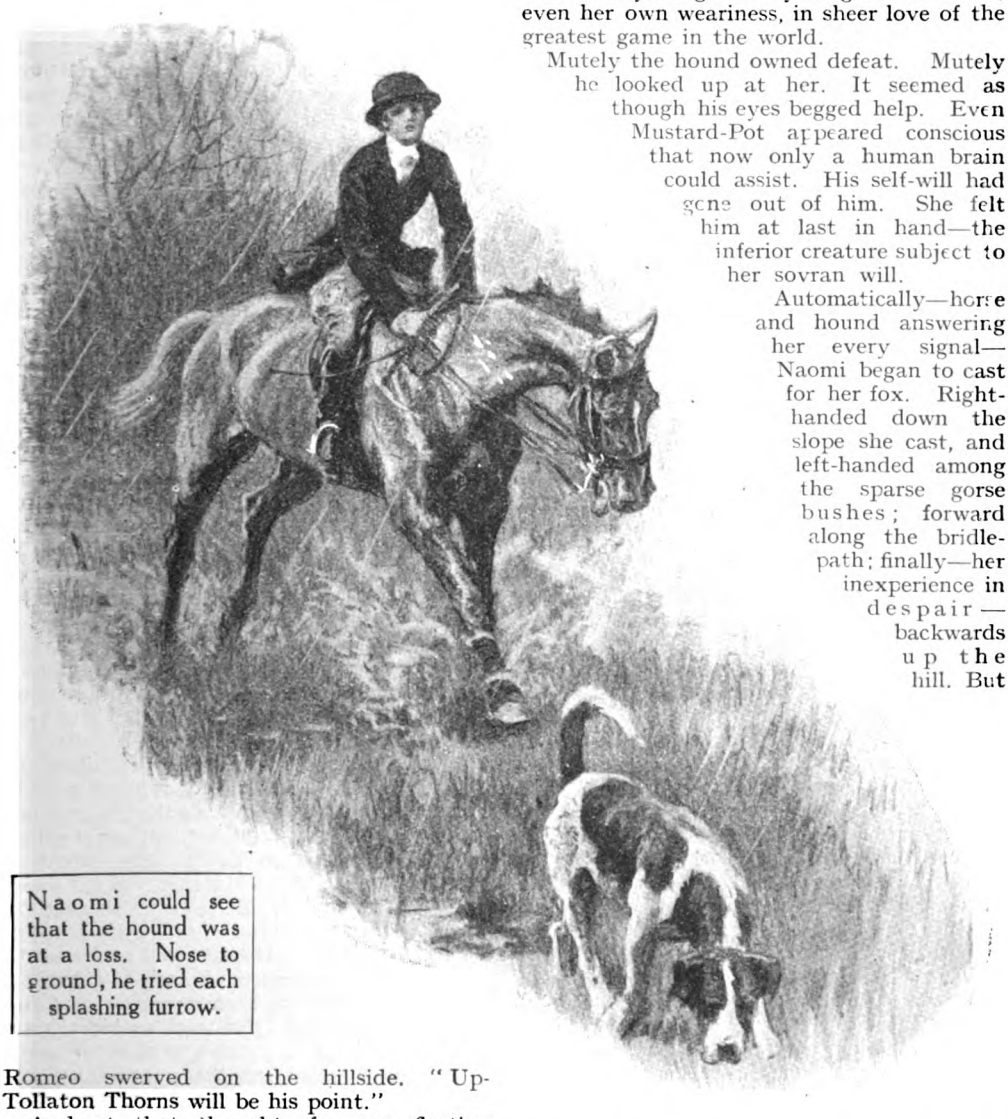
But Mustard-Pot was still unwearied, though the breath steamed from his nostrils, and his yellow ears were caked brown with sweat and the thorn-pricks had bloodied his belly. Tireless, he jig-jogged in the wake of the hound. The hound refused to own defeat. Nose to ground, he tried each splashing furrow. Nose to ground, he tried each sodden ridge.

"Shall I whip him off?" thought the weary Naomi. Somehow she could not whip him off. The tie between fox and hound had snapped; but the link between horse and hound still held. Now she too was linked with them. She could feel a Power gripping her—gripping her like a man's arms round the waist. Then, once, twice, and again, Romeo feathered. Then, finding his line, he gave tongue and went off—slowly—slowly along the ridge at fence-side—through an open gateway—and down wind past Saxenham Parva towards Middleton-on-the-Hill.

Breasting that hill, the trail turned up-wind again; so that the first snow-scurry caught Naomi full in the face. The driven flakes blinded her, blinded Mustard-Pot; but Romeo they could not blind. Romeo's nostrils still whiffed his quarry. His quarry

had veered again, veered left-handed down the slope.

The snow-scurry blew clear; and the rain with it. Wiping her eyes, Naomi saw the wooded swells and grassy falls of High Leicestershire spread out map-like below. "Up-Tollaton Thorns," she thought, as Romeo swerved on the hillside. "Up-Tollaton Thorns will be his point."



Naomi could see that the hound was at a loss. Nose to ground, he tried each splashing furrow.

And at that thought, for one fleeting second, she remembered her husband. Somewhere among those wooded swells and grassy falls her husband and another woman rode side by side. The thought stung her. Convulsively her wet knees gripped the wet saddle-flaps as Mustard-Pot went skating for the valley.

Ahead of them, Romeo hunted mute on a dying scent. Behind them, Middleton Hill rose high and higher, blocking out the known country. "Up-Tollaton Thorns," she thought again. "Seven good miles if it's an inch. And I hardly know a fence of it." Then Romeo checked dead at a water-logged bridle-path, and she forgot Victor, forgot Mrs. Monty, forgot everything in the world, even her own weariness, in sheer love of the greatest game in the world.

Mutely the hound owned defeat. Mutely he looked up at her. It seemed as though his eyes begged help. Even Mustard-Pot appeared conscious that now only a human brain could assist. His self-will had gone out of him. She felt him at last in hand—the inferior creature subject to her sovran will.

Automatically—horse and hound answering her every signal—Naomi began to cast for her fox. Right-handed down the slope she cast, and left-handed among the sparse gorse bushes; forward along the bridle-path; finally—her inexperience in despair—backwards up the hill. But the snow-chilled ground gave Romeo never a whiff of fox.

Utterly baffled, Naomi drew rein. Utterly despairing, she looked down along the bridle-path, across the gate at the end of the bridle-path, over the roadway and up the ant-heaped ground beyond. "Not a sign of him. You've had rotten luck, Romeo,

old boy; you deserved your kill," she said to the beaten hound.

The hot fury of the chase was out of her, and the hot temper of early morning with it. Cold shook her as she sat. A deadly depression nagged at her mind. She had lost her fox—she had lost Victor—she had lost everything that made life worth while. Leg-weary, arm-weary, and love-weary, she made to turn Mustard-Pot for home.

And then, without warning, there happened the greatest miracle of all that miraculous day. For suddenly, strangely, stupefyingly, Mustard-Pot—his great head lifted, his great eyes staring, and his great ears flatter than pancakes—began to whinny, as Naomi had never heard horse whinny before, to rider on his back and to hound at his heels. "Look! Look! Look!" whinnied Mustard-Pot, watching the slope, where a speck, a far and a fox-shaped speck, fled zigzagging between the ant-heaps.

Naomi, flung hard against the saddle-peak, never saw that speck, never realized the miracle. As the rested Mustard-Pot, whinnying no longer, sprang to full gallop, Fear, the fear of things uncontrollable—that fear which had turned even Victor's bowels to water—entered into her. Hardly her knees found their grip again; hardly she knew Mustard-Pot heading for the gate; hardly she knew Romeo following. Speed and panic blinded her every faculty. She could only cling, cling in desperation, to the rain-slippery saddle.

They came to the gate, to the roadway. Over the gate, over the roadway, flashed Mustard-Pot. Through the gate, over the roadway, flashed the badger-pied hound. For Romeo had understood, dimly, his friend's whinnying. He and his friend were one mind, one body now—canine nose and equine eye each helping each as the need arose. Who cared for humans? Up hill, missing the ant-hills with every instinctive stride, bounded the trusty Mustard-Pot. Up hill, close at Mustard-Pot's heels, bounded the trusting Romeo.

Yet still Naomi could not realize the truth. Even when Mustard-Pot, halting a second among those ant-hills, whinnied for the last time, and Romeo, nose to ground, answered his whinny with one full-throated burst of blood-mad music, she failed to understand. Fear paralyzed her every thought; so that the next four miles were madness—a madness of swished blackthorn and rapped timber; a madness of scurrying fields that vanished, as landscapes vanish from train windows, under Mustard-Pot's terrible hoofings; a madness of hills up-galloped and down-galloped; a madness of wind-whistle and rain-drizzle and snow-scurry; of shouting wood-cutters and pointing cyclists and dumbfoundered carters glimpsed sideways as one leaped from turf to road.

But always through her madness Naomi heard hound-music; and always, even in her madness, she knew that neither horse nor hound, neither fox nor rider, could hold that pace across the cut-and-laids of Tollaton Vale.

VII.

"ROTTEN, isn't it?" murmured Mrs. Monty Perivale to Sir Victor Lomondham, Bart. "Why didn't you take my advice and knock off at the cross-roads?"

"We may find at the Thorns." Sir Victor scowled through the rain-drizzle at the jig-jogging pack. Mrs. Monty had headed the only fox of the day—and he was hating her pretty vigorously.

"What's the good of finding at this time in the afternoon?" she retorted—thinking of Sir Victor's Rolls-Royce.

They jig-jogged on up Little Tollaton Hill. Behind them trotted the last remnants of a disappointed field. Ahead of them, the Lady Master and her huntsman whispered in consultation. "I'd take 'em by Madman's Lane if I were you, Hatcher," said the Lady Master. "Farmer Luffenham told me there's an outlier in one of his fields."

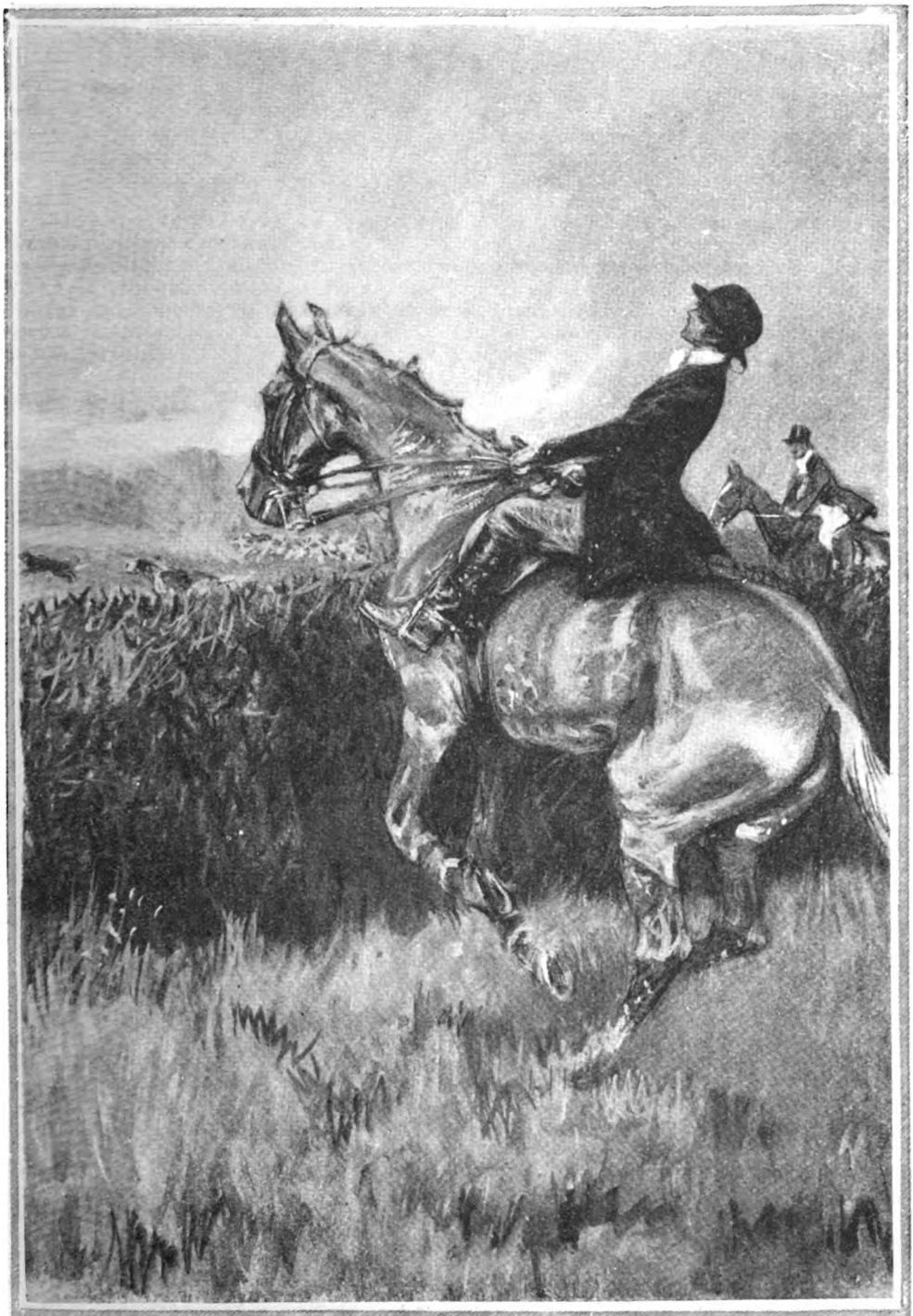
The First Whip knocked a gate open, and Masterful, Hatcher's grey, the pack at his heels, squelched heavily down the lane.

"Might just as well have gone home," grumbled Hatcher, looking about him over the low hedges. On his right plough lands stretched stickily to the tree-hidden spire of Up-Tollaton Church. Two miles ahead of him, down a dip and up again, Tollaton Thorns showed black and ragged on the fence-barred slope. Towards the Thorns, half in view and half crest-hidden, serpentined the green of Tollaton Vale.

"Funny," thought Hatcher. "I'd swear I heard a hound." He drew rein, and the pack halted at his grey's heels. He clapped a hand to his ear. He listened. "Queer!" he muttered under his breath. "Deuced queer! Must have been a cur-dog. Can't have been a hound. No meet within twenty miles of us."

He took his hand from his ear and squelched on. What the devil was the matter with Masterful? Had Masterful, too, heard that uncanny cur-dog? Hatcher halted again; and halting eyed the Vale. Waiting his will, the bitch-pack quivered round Masterful's heels.

"Why don't he go on?" groused Sir Victor to Mrs. Monty; and even as he spoke, Hatcher stood up in his stirrups, and with one terrific "View holla!" capped his pack down the lane, out of the lane and



"Jump or die," she thought as she rode. Somehow, she and Mustard-Pot must struggle over this last obstacle.

full-split for the Thorns. After him went the field, and, first of the field, Victor.

Victor had forgotten Mrs. Monty. He could hardly believe, as he took his roan between his calves and lifted him out of the lane, that his eyes had told him the truth; that he had really seen a fox with one solitary hound at his brush and one solitary rider bucketing to catch up with them emerge from the green of the Vale and toil desperately up the slope towards the Thorns.

Yet there they went, fox and hound and horseman, barely two hundred yards in front; and there, on his right, hareing diagonally up the fence-barred slope to cut them off from the Thorns, went Hatcher with twenty couples streaming to his cap. The fox was dead-beat. His brush draggled the ground. Hardly he crawled through the last of his fences; hardly he held on up the slope.

And now Hatcher's horn twanged; and now Hatcher's pack, streaming into view over that ultimate blackthorn, burst to fiercest music; and now Romeo summoned his last ounce of strength lest these upstart bitches rob him of blood; and now, suddenly, Victor recognized the solitary rider for his wife, the solitary horse for Mustard-Pot; and now, recognizing Mustard-Pot at the last gasp and his wife's face death-white with fatigue, the heart under Victor's scarlet grew cold with fear at thought of the ditch beyond the blackthorn—the ditch which even freshest horse might fail to clear.

BUT Naomi, riding that desperate finish, never recognized Victor. Her mind—all that fatigue had left her of it—was concentrated on Mustard-Pot's fencing. Somehow, she and Mustard-Pot, each aiding each, had struggled through Tollaton Vale. Somehow, they must struggle over this last obstacle. Somehow, not this new pack which had sprung suddenly from nowhere, not this fresh huntsman, but weary she and weary Mustard-Pot and weary Romeo must kill the fox they had run through half a county. "Jump or die," she thougl t as she rode. "Jump or die," she muttered as the giant gelding, wise to his roan stable-companion racing diagonally to be level with him, gathered hocks under belly for the spring.

She felt that gigantic fore-hand lift between her aching thighs; glimpsed blackthorn under her boots; felt rather than saw the unexpected ditch; felt Mustard-Pot double-jump in mid-air to carry it; realized, even before the stirrups flew up from her toes, that he had just failed; felt her hat crumple to the smash of the ground—and waited, waited endlessly in gathering darkness, waited paralysed all through that century of a second which would tell her whether or no she had fallen clear.

ÆONS after that century-long second, Naomi Lomondham rolled over on her left elbow and opened her eyes. The world had gone queer. She saw it double through the blur of concussion and fatigue; saw two Victors wrenching two roans to their haunches; saw two Mustard-Pots staggering to their feet; saw—strangest sight of all—a brace of badger-pied hounds pull a brace of foxes over in the open. Then a thousand black-and-tan couples smothered badger-pies and foxes, and she heard herself say faintly through the renewing smother, "Hallo, Victor! I thought you were with Mrs. Monty."

"Thank God she's safe; but what the hell's she talking about?" thought Sir Victor Lomondham, Bart., who was inclined to be coarse when under strong emotion.

VIII.

"TALL?" protested Mustard-Pot, when I went to him for confirmation of the tale. "Tall? I don't call that a tall story. Why, one of Romeo's great-great-great-grandfathers——"

"You mean Rambler?" I interpolated.

"Of course I mean Rambler." Mustard-Pot stamped his off-fore on the stable-tiles. "Didn't Rambler once hunt a fox on his own—twenty miles without even a horse to help him—and kill at ten o'clock o'night?"

"Admitted," said I. "But what about *your* viewing the fox? No human will believe that, you know."

"More foo's humans!" The yellow horse laid his ears back and snapped at Silver Glory through the bars of the loose-box. "*You* ought to know that that's perfectly possible."

"I?"

"Yes. You. Didn't that big screw of yours——?"

I protested at this unkind reference to my one poor animal, but Mustard-Pot, who has twice in his own varied career fetched as low as a ten-pound note, went on scornfully.

"Screw! Of course Ladybird's a screw. What can you expect at that price? Still, she hunted a fox once. On her own. Don't you remember? You were hacking across those fields from Little Overdine station and Charlie popped out just in front of you. Now, I ask you, did Ladybird follow that fox on her own or didn't she?"

Whereupon I broke off the argument and went thoughtful to tea with Naomi.

"Victor can't bear the Perivale woman," she confided, pouring it for me.

WHEN X EQUALS MAUD

by

HERBERT SHAW

ILLUSTRATED BY BALLIOL SALMON

THE discovery was too sudden, too brutal. It seemed to the pretty young wife of the Reverend Leonard Miles that her life and the lives of the two children had slammed at full speed into an unexpected terminus. And she was bending over the wreckage. Very quickly other thoughts came, not one at a time, so that she could deal with them with her usual unhurried clearness, but jumping unfairly at her hand-in-hand. The persisting thought, for quite a while, was that this cheque she had found among the littered papers of the writing-table was the first real secret she had ever had from Leonard.

It was the secret itself, in picture form. Constance Miles had imagination, besides a cheery courage which expressed itself in wonderfully efficient handling, both of her unpractical dreamer-husband and of the work necessitated by one maid, two children, a quite inadequate number of hundreds a year, and her position as a clergyman's wife. Quite gaily, Constance Miles made every week an adventure in economy; there were few weeks in which she could not honestly claim a victory over the bogey of expenditure.

She didn't know why she was still staring at the cheque. It looked oddly blurred. Even for Leonard's familiar, careless writing the letters were more waggly than usual. "Pay Maud Scrutton twenty-four pounds. Leonard Miles."

Suddenly Constance was violently afraid of the wretched thing. She thrust it far under the heaped papers, almost at the bottom, and some of the papers above it slithered down and disclosed Leonard's cheque-book. Sixty seconds of absorbed and half-guilty accountancy disclosed three or four counterfoils that were equal calamities with that astounding cheque.

Constance Miles reburied her discoveries. She sat upright, stared thoughtfully at nothing for a little while, and then laughed.

"Poor old Leonard!" she said. "Fancy coming in for *my* cheque and finding this!"

All the unmarried philosophers tell you wisely that married life is merely a succession of discoveries, big and small. The clever fellows leave it at that. They provide no useful text-book to tell wives what to do when the crisis comes. Should they scream or sit tight? Ask cunning, trap-like questions or keep darkling silence? Should they shut themselves up in resentful gloom or cynically sparkle? Job or George Graves—under which banner? In short, should they act or think?

It depends on the sort of husband, the sort of wife, and the sort they visualize Maud as being. But there is one unchangeable rule in these affairs. In the first unpleasant shock of discovery Everywoman feels rather as if she had forgotten to put on her blouse that morning. Looking down to reassure herself that this is not so, making certain at the same time that her hair is not falling down, she resolves, sensibly but fiercely, *never to tell anybody.*

Do you think that's wise of them?

Anyway, Constance Miles got as far as that. Then she obeyed an impulse, almost as unalterable as that other rule of Everywoman's, when she got up and looked at herself in the oval mirror above the mantelpiece.

She wondered vaguely, not without a faint amusement, rather like making up a story—exciting to invent the ends——

Where *was* Maud? Not here in Cedarswood, that select and attractive suburb. Leonard was popular and above gossip,

careless and impetuous, but he would never have risked the wagging of tongues in Cedarswood.

In London, where you can hide any knots that time makes in marriage ribbons? Farther, in the North, where Leonard went sometimes to see his people? What *was* the name of that girl in saxe blue who was so friendly with me that week Leonard and I stayed at the Avalon in Brighton?

She could not remember the name, but she was certain that one wasn't Maud. Mauds into saxe blue don't go. They're more likely to be rather yellowy persons, on the big side, in black charmeuse, with a strong dash of diamond rings. Or so Maud came to life, vaguely, behind the intent Everywoman that faced Constance from the mirror.

"Find Maud," commanded Everywoman. "But how do you start?" asked Constance. both in silence. And both of them, gazing fixedly at each other, pressed hard with four forefingers just where the lines come that matter most and worst. From the inner corners of four eyes, steadily along the top of their cheekbones. They smiled in friendly reassurance. Not even a baby crow had dared to alight there. Maud, shadow somewhere out in the unknown, no matter what you are like, you will never be able to better the lustrous hair, the challenging eyes, the bright mouths of these two earnest students of the situation your sudden appearance—by proxy of one cheque and four counterfoils—has created.

The steady eyes of Constance Miles signalled a confident "Well, *I'm* all right!" to her close friend in the mirror. There wasn't a dissentient vote. But there was an interruption. The front door of the house was opened and slammed. Thus, habitually, Leonard entered.

Constance allowed herself just one more (look out, Maud!) glance of completely satisfied appraisal. Then she ran out of Leonard's study, rounded the second flight of stairs with the silence and speed of a Rolls on top gear, gained her own room, and, still without any noise, shut the door.

From the top of the first flight Leonard called out "Constance!" waited, called again. No answer. Cicely, the maid, appearing suddenly with broom and accessories, looked at him in her slow way. It was her second appearance in the passage. She had pushed her nose and her broom slightly into the passage a moment before, and had only just missed being overturned by the whirlwind retreat of Constance. Cicely, a romanticist, noticed things. She said, lying but truthful:—

"Mrs. Miles is very busy in her room, sir."

"Oh," said Leonard. "I say, if you find the *Times* knocking about, bring it up, will you?"

He withdrew into his study. He sat down, ran his fingers over his unbusiness-like hair, looked worried, thought with disgust of his golf handicap and the childish way he had played last Saturday, tried the telephone for the second time that morning and again found it woodenly dumb, pushed aside the heap of papers, dashed at the inkstand, and began to write letters. Leonard always dashed at things. He didn't like letter-writing—especially this morning. He groaned, and told the untidy little study about it.

"This won't do," he declared, and his tone was unresigned but hopeless. "It's got to stop."

He wrote on.

In spotless bedroom, in untidy study where brooms are rarely allowed to enter, the opposing forces are entrenched. For the moment the front lines of both are quiet. It looks like rain, if not worse. The story is simple, mathematical. Illustration follows:—

LEONARD AND CONSTANCE.
X

In plain words, Leonard and Constance are divided by Maud, and *X* is Maud; but though we know that, it gets us no farther. You do not know Maud. Before long you shall. You are quite right about one thing. She is not a nice person.

THE doors of the study opened. The hunched shoulders of Leonard—Leonard busily writing—looked as though he would grunt when he said anything next. He did. He grunted:—

"Put it down anywhere!"

"What?"

"The *Times*, of course. Couldn't you find it?"

Leonard popped the sealed envelope safely into the heap, felt a draught, turned, and saw Constance instead of Cicely. He slewed round.

"I beg your pardon, old girl. I thought it was Cicely with the paper. I sit on it all through breakfast. I can't make out why I always lose it directly I get up. Can you?"

Constance advanced into the room—metaphorically, into the centre of the ring. The opening was there. She sparred for another.

"There are lots of things I can't make out," she remarked, gloomily.

The attempt at another opening flopped. Leonard did not notice her gloom, her seriousness.

"I should say there are," he agreed,

brightly. "There's this wretched telephone still out of order. I write to tell them about it. Do they come? No. Sit down, Connie. What's that you've got in your hand?"

"It's the list of the things the children want at school—the things they must have. Two new serge frocks, and more shoes. And Nancy must have a new coat.

Leonard popped the sealed envelope safely into the heap, turned, and saw Constance instead of Cicely. He slewed round.

The one Babs has will have to do for the present."

Leonard became thoughtful.

"I think I can get everything for fifteen pounds; I've made out a list. You said you would let me have a cheque."

Leonard fumbled. He was awfully nice and he was awfully sorry, but he had forgotten. He admitted being a confirmed forgetter. But just now he had run very short. Didn't want to write another cheque if he could possibly help it. There were lots of things—vaguely. How about next month? The children must have the frocks, of course. "For the cheque, I mean?"

It was a facer. Constance retreated to the ropes. This refusal of the promised shopping cheque was so unexpected. It made

the secret jump up blackly, and it made her lose courage. "Pay Maud Scrutton twenty-four pounds." She felt hot and angry. The silence and Leonard were both uncomfortable.

"We always pay at once for things, Leonard," she objected at last.

"I know we do. But just for once—— Get them somewhere else. You needn't go to London for them this time, even if you do have to pay a few shillings more. Get them at Bird's. I've seen some very nice kiddies' things in Bird's windows."

"All right," said Constance. She got up. Leonard had the air of hoping she wasn't going to stay in the room another minute. Then a determined Klaxon bellowed outside, and Leonard came to life. He jumped up.

"I knew there was something I had to tell you!" he exclaimed, reproachfully. "That's Kentish. He's come for you, Connie."

"George Kentish——!"

"There's his car. He wrote this morning, and I slipped out to telephone him. He's not going into town to-day, and he said he'd come down for you and drive you back to the Court."

"Why ever didn't you tell me?"

"I forgot. But, anyway, it's all right, Connie. I don't know what we'd do without Kentish in Cedarswood. Directly any fine weather comes along you can have the grounds of the Court for your bazaar. He thought you'd like to look over the place and make all your arrangements in good time. Anything you want, he said."

The door opened as though a storm had taken command, and the big man who entered looked first at Constance and then at her husband before he took the Corona from his lips.

"Good morning, Mrs. Constance. How do you do, Leonard? He's quite right, Mrs. Constance. Anything you want, I told him—you can have all the downstairs rooms of the Court if they're necessary. And all the flowers the gardeners can get together. You and I are going to make this bazaar go. Eh? We'll have them talking!"

The rich bachelor who lived at the Court radiated the cheerfulness, self-reliance, and prosperity of the business man to whom every day brings increasing success. The best friend they had in Cedarswood, he owned the largest house in the place, the lordliest cars, the greatest number of servants. Constance's eyes sparkled.

"You're always helping us, Mr. Kentish! It's tremendously good of you. It was unfair of me to ask you again."

"Nonsense!" His big, jolly face was all smiles. "A lonely old man like myself wants every chance he can get of doing a bit for charity. I'm going to ask Leonard if he can spare you for the day. I'm ready whenever you are, Mrs. Constance."

"I won't be five minutes." Constance hurried from the room. George Kentish made Leonard take a cigar, and asked if he might use the telephone.

"It's out of order," Leonard apologized.

"May I use your window, then?" said Kentish. Pushing up the window, he leaned out and called to the blue-uniformed chauffeur in the huge blue Daimler. The man looked up.

"Swish back and tell them Mrs. Miles will be staying for lunch. And then come back here just as soon as you can."

Shutting the window, he looked at Leonard. "Three times five minutes, of course," he said, sounding his cheery laugh. "I know them. He'll be back in plenty of time. How are things with you?"

"Fine, thanks," said Leonard, in a rainy voice, and his visitor looked at him again—thoughtfully. "I say, Kentish, it's awfully good of you to let us have the Court. Connie is very keen on making a success of that show."

"Now, then," warned Kentish. "No thanks, if you please. She'll make a success of it all right; your wife's a wonderful woman, Miles."

"She's the best in the world," Leonard asserted, very warmly.

THANK you, it had been really perfect—a lovely day. She had enjoyed herself very, very much. Almost a brushing shadow of regret, of envy, to tarnish her honest and sincere gratitude. No trouble or annoyance even seemed able to come near this big house with its moneyed easiness of life, this big, comfortable, smiling man, with his kindly thoughts and his shrewd, intelligent eyes.

"I'm very glad you enjoyed it," George Kentish said.

As Constance watched for the lights of the Daimler to appear she realized for the first time that the day had been like an hour of release.

She had almost been able to forget her discovery of the morning. She must now go back to it.

Constance Miles's little sigh was unconscious. The man sitting near to her on the wide, soft window-seat moved his position.

"What's the matter between you and Leonard?" asked big George Kentish, bluntly. "What's wrong?"

He was suddenly very grim. His eyes and his mouth were very hard. Any intelligent man who had seen George Kentish just now would have suffered a shock. Would have placed this big, cheery fellow as a ruthless thruster towards his own

purposes; would have wondered whether the breezy kindliness of George Kentish might not be a mask for cunning. But Constance did not look at him. She felt too frightened. She exclaimed, with incredulous awe :—

" Mr Kentish ! You *know !* "

He shook his head. " I don't know what the matter *is*. But I know very well there's something the matter. You're worried to death. I didn't want second sight to spot that the moment I saw you and Leonard this morning."

" Leonard's worried," she said, lamely. On the drive wheels grated to a standstill before the house. Constance got up unsteadily. " I'll go and get my things on, I think, Mr Kentish. There's the car."

" Just as you like, Mrs. Constance."

HER host's voice was quite ordinary. He stood before her now, astonishingly solid against the darkness of the great room. And Constance did not quite finish standing up. She seemed to tumble back upon the wide seat, beaten. Beaten—by herself. That was what made it humiliating. She knew now that she was just like any ordinary wife. The gay spirit with which she had confronted that morning's revelation was all pretence. It wouldn't hold. She had dared to think that she could keep that secret hidden, could remain undisturbed, confident—willing to watch Leonard. The beastliness of watching Leonard——

Did she really know Leonard ? Constance shrugged her shoulders. At least, she knew the best of Leonard too well to wish to watch him.

" We'll have a little light," said Kentish, turning in the darkness. The softest light came from a ceiling bowl, the blinds came down at a touch. " Take it easy, Mrs. Constance. How do you feel ? If you're in a hurry you've only to say so."

" I'd rather wait a little while, if you don't mind."

" Of course you would. Don't disturb yourself now ; I can get those curtains without your moving an inch. That's it."

She lifted her white face. " Mr. Kentish, I'm afraid for Leonard. I shouldn't say anything—but I'm desperately afraid. You know what Cedarswood is, and how popular Leonard is with everybody. There are lots of nice people, but put them all together and they'd smash Leonard if there was any scandal. Wouldn't they ? Leonard's like a big boy ; he never thinks what he's doing, never considers very much. And I'm sure there's something wrong. Yet I wouldn't ask Leonard about it. This morning I thought I could. But I couldn't—not then. And now—it's funny—I know I could never ask him."

She stopped dead. Had she told him ? She did not know. One second Constance hoped she had, the next she tried to recall exactly what she had said. It was odd to see his usually smiling face so grave. But he still looked very friendly. And solid—that was the word, Constance decided, looking at him in her distress—one of those rare men whose foundations are impregnable. There was such a quality of safety about George Kentish. He conveyed the idea that his future was impregnable also.

" Rather a lot about Leonard," he commented, dryly. " What about yourself ? "

She stared at him. She said, blankly but quite truthfully, " I don't understand. I'm thinking of Leonard. And then there's the children—it's horrible ! "

" For the moment," Kentish told her, stolidly, " I'm thinking of you, if you don't mind. Is money the trouble ? " He was aware of a little awkwardness, his big hands moved a little. " That's easy ; that's down my street."

" It isn't money." Her denial was vehement. He saw the fingers of her hands grip together.

" Then it's a woman," George Kentish pronounced flatly. " I'm going to talk straight, Mrs. Constance. I never could beat about the bush—never found it worth while. You'd better let *me* ask Leonard, if you can't. I'll frighten him out of his life ; it's the only way. I'll pull him up. Trust me ! "

Constance was aghast. Then she *had* told him. She heard his voice queerly, as if it came from the end of a tunnel. " Of course I'm right. It's an infernal shame ! "

" You wouldn't tell Leonard what I've told you ! "

" No. I'm not going to ask you another question. If you don't want to tell me what Master Leonard has been up to, I'll find out myself. Whatever it is, I'll see that he stops it. Because if he doesn't, as you said yourself, he'll go smash. I know Cedarswood people."

Constance tried to consider, tried to think. But she only looked at George Kentish—realized nothing except his determination, his strength.

" Leonard would listen to you."

" He'd have to. Nobody outside would know anything ; I'd watch that. Mrs. Constance, I've been here at the Court nearly five years. When I first took the place everybody in Cedarswood wanted to know all about me. They pumped me to know why I had never married, how much I made a year, just what my business was in the City, and all that nonsense. I very soon put a stop to that, and they learned to leave me alone. What's my business got to do with them ?

"They can take me or leave me—and I guess they take me all right now—I'm worth something to the place. They don't look down their noses at me now, as they did then. I'm business all the time—always have been—and everything goes back to money, when you work it out. I'm very fond of you and your husband. There wasn't any of that questioning flummery about you; you were nice to me from the start. I've backed him every way I could, I——"

"You've been the kindest friend to us both, Mr. Kentish—to me."

"It's been all pleasure. Leonard's a good boy, but he's got no business. He doesn't want it, perhaps, in his work—we all know there isn't another church in Cedarswood that's packed every Sunday. I've helped there, Mrs. Constance, though I say it myself."

He was right there. George Kentish was one of the most prominent, certainly the most influential, of the members of Leonard's church. She recalled his unfailing help, the value of his quiet advice on occasions hard to count. She murmured, "If only you could help Leonard——" and stopped.

"Leave it to me," he declared, instantly. His confidence made her think of George Kentish as a rock, of Leonard as drifting sand, blown near the edge of a cliff. "I said I wouldn't ask another question; I'm not going to. If Leonard's gone off the rails, I'll put him back again. Without a soul in Cedarswood knowing, except you and me. That's a promise, Mrs. Constance. And Leonard will never know you told me a word. I promise that too."

She gazed up at him during a long moment of silence. Something of his own confidence passed to her, and she welcomed it with a wonderful sense of relief. Again Constance thought of him as impregnable. Could it be true that the thing which was worrying her to death was there only to be swept away—by him? Suddenly she felt it must be true. And after that it was inevitable. She told George Kentish everything.

She felt years younger. She felt every bit as young as yesterday morning, when Leonard and the children had been everything there was to think about. Before the intolerable shadow of Maud had come into her house.

"I'm your plain man," George Kentish told her. "I'm money and common-sense, you might say. And money and common-sense can settle anything in the world. I'll settle this. You're to go home and forget all about it till I've got something to tell you. Leave it to me."

He helped adjust her coat (its second season), patted her shoulder, held her hand for quite a little while, opened the door of the magical Daimler himself. Waved goodbye to her till the bend of the drive took the car. Went back into the big room and stood in exactly the same position. A dark discontent changed the jolly face of George Kentish. He seemed to see Constance Miles still sitting there before him, welcomed a return of a pleasant thrill. George Kentish was a rich man, but he was a lonely man. The last half-hour of Constance's visit, the slow half-hour in which his sympathy had persuaded her to confession of her trouble, had been none too long for him.

He roused himself, shaking off that vision of Constance sitting there, shaking off regretfully that other vision of a woman like Constance moving like light about the rooms of his big house. George Kentish became money and common-sense again. Problems: To find Maud; to frighten Leonard Miles out of his life about Maud; to send Maud packing. And Leonard must on no account know how George Kentish had known of Maud's existence.

He had promised that.

Money and common-sense rang up his office in the City, asked a few quick questions. Then Kentish rang up the superintendent of the telephone area which included Cedarswood. Money and common-sense never forgets anything, always knows the right men, always has a pull.

"I want to ask a favour," said George Kentish. "You know the Miles's house in Hillcrest Avenue? His telephone's out of order. Would it hurt anybody very much if it wasn't put right again for three days from now? Or two days, even, might do—I'll let you know."

THREE days later George Kentish called at the Miles's house. Constance was out, and he found Leonard in his study, waiting for tea. Tea came. Kentish allowed his host to enjoy half a cup, and then pulled the rope—hard.

"This won't do, you know, Leonard," he said, bluntly.

Leonard's first bewildered fancy that he was referring to the tea crumbled to dust at the sight of the other's face.

"What on earth do you mean, Kentish?" he asked.

"Maud," said Kentish.

It was brief but alarmingly adequate. Leonard stared at him as though he had been a wizard. Kentish awaited anger, rebellion, or passionate denial, but none of these things came. Leonard Miles just stared at his accusing guest with terror in his eyes.

"Maud," repeated Kentish. "Maud Scrutton, Old Yorke Street, London, W. For your sake, Leonard, I've been making a

lot of inquiries about the lady. Some friends of mine on the Baltic Exchange know pretty well all there is to know about the way she does business. It's hard for anybody to get out of her clutches once he gets in. But I'm going to get you out, Leonard. You must have been mad!"

"I meant no harm. I've done nothing wrong. I hoped——"

"Cut it out," the other ordered. His face was hard. "The Bankruptcy Court is full of hopers who didn't stick to their own job. Hopers who back horses get the e quicker han the ordinary kind. How much have you lost to this advertising woman bookmaker? How long has it been.going on?"

Leonard Miles re covered a little. He gasped his chin back into position, and tried to meet the other's eyes.

"What's the good o your bullying me, Kentish? You're rich—you've everything you want. You couldn't understand, you——"

"I'm a plain man, and perhaps I can't understand," Kentish interrupted, disgustedly. "But don't forget I'm talking to you as a friend, and that sort of whining excuse makes me sick. I never backed a horse in my life, so I don't know much about it But I've friends in the City that do. I've made it my business to collect information from them about this Maud Scrutton. Did you ever have a win from her?"

"What's the matter between you and Leonard?" asked big George Kentish, bluntly. "What's wrong?"

"Two or three pounds now and then," Leonard answered, miserably.

I thought so. And you're afraid to tell me what you've lost. And you've got the best wife in the world, two jolly children—and you sit there and tell me I've got everything. I know what you get from the church, Leonard. Five hundred would almost cover your income. It isn't only that; you put your whole future in jeopardy. How long do you suppose Cedarswood would stand you if you were known to be a betting man?

They'd have you out the quickest they know how. You'd be finished—done ! "

Leonard's silence admitted it. He felt—and still looked—like a convicted prisoner at the bar. He could find only two words of defence :—

" Nobody knows."

" Not your fault if they don't." Judge and prosecuting counsel spoke, as it were, together. " The day before yesterday I saw you coming out of the little post-office at the end of the town. Suppose you thought it clever not to use the main one. I shouted after you, but you didn't hear. I had to send a wire, and there on the pad, scratched with a hard pencil in plain English, I saw the impression of the wire you had just sent. I've got it here."

He unfolded it.

" There it is, as plain as if it was actually written. Code, I suppose. Wouldn't it make anybody curious, anybody who knew you, anybody who liked you ? ' To Maud London. Hunt Galloping Dick.' Signed, ' Miles.' That's how I knew. Galloping Dick is the name of a horse. That's obvious to an idiot. What's ' Hunt ' mean ? "

" I forget," said Leonard, honestly.

" Good Lord ! " exclaimed Kentish. " And you tell me you hoped to make money out of backing horses ! Did you remember what it meant when you put it down, or didn't you ? "

" Of course," Leonard Miles answered, with dignity. " I don't suppose you'll believe me, but I was really very careful. That's the first wire I ever sent from any Cedarswood post-office. I always used the telephone, but it got out of order, and I can't persuade them to send anybody to see to it. I'll tell you what ' Hunt ' means in a minute. Here you are," Leonard announced, unlocking a drawer of his writing-table and fishing from a heap of papers a neat gold-printed card. " This is the code. ' Hunt ' means two pounds."

" To Maud Scrutton or to you ? " Kentish inquired, with sarcasm. " Did Galloping Dick win or lose that day ? "

The effort to remember was obviously painful. It lasted over a minute.

" She lost."

" Who ? Maud ? " asked Kentish, not very hopefully.

" No. Galloping Dick."

" I think I should have guessed it," Kentish commented, dryly. " Any other winners this week ? "

Leonard shook his head. " I decided," he said, brightly, " to do nothing more till the telephone was in order. Yes, I remember now, I decided that—firmly."

" You are visited by occasional moments of sense," remarked his questioner, approvingly. " Did you lose anything last week ? "

" Did I ? Let me think." Leonard consulted a few samples from the muddle of papers with a painful slowness. " Ah, I've got everything here. I put it down systematically. I'm afraid I lost last week, it seems."

George Kentish was valiantly patient, though his hands moved irritably. " How much ? "

" A bad week, I fear," replied Leonard, in a kind of frightened whisper. " No, not a good week at all."

" How much ? "

" I have it here." Leonard's wavering forefinger pinned down a piece of paper. " I have everything here—if I can find it. Last week—twenty-four pounds. The *Times*—in other matters an excellent paper—favoured, wrongly, a filly with a very pretty name. Etta-something—no, that isn't right—nearly right, though. Now I have it—Coronetta. It—she—came in, I believe, fourth."

KENTISH saw red. Perhaps he thought of the worry Constance had suffered, and he slammed one of his great hands upon the table so that the other man jumped.

" Twenty-four pounds ! " he echoed. " Twenty-four pounds in a week—and you don't earn six hundred a year. What have you got to say for yourself, man ? "

Leonard jumped again, and said it. And slowly the hard face of George Kentish changed. Constance hadn't been well lately—she wasn't up to things—there was too much work in the house—and then the Church work. Leonard had dreamed a wonderful dream of, somehow, getting enough money together to send her to Switzerland for a month. Kentish, always so decent to them, would understand. There had come, addressed to the previous tenant of the house next door, which had been empty for some time, one of the inviting circulars of Maud Scrutton, Old Yorke Street. Leonard, like the lamb he was in all practical matters, had jumped at the bait with the utterly foolish hope of getting the funds to provide a really good holiday for Constance.

He had lost. He had won, by sheer fluking, a pound or so. He had lost. He had kept on. Still dreaming. The holiday for Constance was farther off than it had ever been. In short, Maud triumphed. Leonard was ashamed, penitent, bitterly remorseful.

" I see," said Kentish, at the end of this confession. His voice was a great deal softer. " I'm going to get to the end of this business—I want the facts. Turn out all those notes you've got there, Leonard, and push them over to me. I want to know how much you've lost altogether. I've got an idea."

In his scrambling way, on odds and ends of paper, Leonard Miles had made a note of every winning and losing transaction in his futile career as a gambler; had kept—carefully locked up—several of the weekly accounts of Maud Scrutton. Kentish's painstaking accountancy of profit and loss was suddenly interrupted by a startling discovery. His exclamation awoke Leonard, brooding painfully over his folly.

"Didn't you tell me you never backed in big amounts? There's no less than two thousand mentioned here—on this coloured slip. What does that mean?"

"I *do* remember that one," Leonard explained, with a kind of jerky pride. "It's a double event. Long odds, they call it—you risk your money a long time before the races are run. You back two horses together. I remember thinking that bet alone would settle Constance's holiday and leave a lot over. Two separate races—two thousand pounds to two pounds—but *both* horses have got to win, you understand?"

"No, I don't," Kentish grumbled. "This slip says, 'Dear Sir, I have obtained the following commissions for you: Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire, two thousand pounds to two pounds win. Odd Money and Double'—Double something—what's the name of the second horse?"

"Doub'e Baulk," replied Leonard, readily. "Wait, though—there were two horses with names very much alike, Double Baulk and Double Blank. I remember hesitating for a long time. Let me think. Yes, I remember now. I decided on Double Baulk for the second race, just because the *Times* said it hadn't a chance, and I'd been playing billiards with Horton at his new house. The first race is over—the Cesarewitch. It was run the other day, and Odd Money won. Didn't you know?"

"I did not," said Kentish, testily, looking at the slip. "You've got me all tangled up. Do you mean to tell me that if Double Baulk wins the second race this Maud Scrutton person will pay over a couple of thousand to you?"

"Of course," Leonard answered, simply. "And if it doesn't win I shall owe her two pounds. It's a thousand to one against—what did she call it in a special circular she sent?—spotting the double. So you can see for yourself that's the same as two thousand to two."

"It seems wonderful to me," remarked Kentish, and a sudden recollection came to him. "By the way, they were shouting something as I drove past the station. When's that second race of yours run?"

Leonard couldn't remember for the moment. So he found the *Times* under a pile of manuscript paper and library books, and opened it.

"By Jove, it's to-day!" He was quite surprised. He looked steadily at Kentish. Quite unexpectedly, he took the other man's hand.

"You've put me right, Kentish. I've been an utter fool. If you like, I'll promise you that I'll never have another bet of any kind. But just fancy, if Double Baulk *has* won, I'll be able to arrange for that holiday for Constance straight away. Two thousand pounds! And you'll have to come with us—I shall insist upon that."

George Kentish laughed. But he did not let go at once of the other's hand. "There's nothing would give me more pleasure," he said, heartily. "If you've brought this amazing chance off——"

And then he pulled his hand away. "I've a paper here," he cried. "I stopped the car and bought a paper for the result of the East Darkshire by-election. Let's have a look."

Even stolid George Kentish was conscious of an odd, but not unpleasant, tingling of excitement. "Double Baulk," he whispered, unconsciously, and Leonard Miles, already looking over his shoulder, echoed, "Yes, that's the one. Double Baulk!"

THERE it was, in the Stop Press, in rather sludgy type. Very near, but very different. DOUBLE BLANK 1—at the head of a list of fourteen runners.

Midway down the list of useless names was Double Baulk. The holiday for Constance was still uncharted.

"Well, that's that," Leonard murmured. He sat down, rather white. "Of course, you couldn't expect it to happen."

"No," agreed Kentish, refolding the stupid paper carefully. "Sit there and try to forget about it, Leonard. Give me those notes of yours again. Now I'll get back to the ordinary world. To work—Lord, if you knew what I think of all this gambling! It ruins nine out of every ten who fool about with it."

"It's not going to ruin Constance and me," declared Leonard. "I've finished with it."

"Good man!" said Kentish. But he spoke abstractedly, busy with the other's puerile figures. Nearly ten minutes had gone before he looked up and laid down his fountain-pen.

"Now, then, Leonard. I've got it all down. You seem to have been feeding Maud Scrutton with pocket-money for the last eleven weeks. Before we go any farther, is there anybody else in this line?"

"On my honour, no."

"I only asked. In those eleven weeks you've won a shilling or two over twenty-one pounds. Were you stupid enough to pay these losing accounts by cheque? The bank would know where it was going——"

" Always by notes. Except this last week. I paid the twenty-four pounds by cheque."

" It can't be helped. Then all these losing accounts are paid ? Right. Then in eleven weeks you've paid this woman just over ninety pounds. Maud Scrutton benefits by a balance of seventy odd. She would ! "

Leonard sat silent. He found himself wondering. George Kentish seemed to him to be suppressing a savage mirth. He saw the other pull a cheque-book from his pocket, and he cried out :—

" What are you doing ? "

" Making good your losses," Kentish barked, crossly, rather as though a dog under the writing-table had suddenly bitten him. " I hate seeing good money wasted. Seventy pounds—on your solemn promise that you drop all betting, all gambling, for ever."

Leonard touched his arm violently.

" Don't, please, Kentish. It's absurd ! I won't take it from you."

" Do you mean you won't give me that promise ? "

" Certainly not. I've given it you already. Don't be afraid I sha'n't keep it."

" I'm not in the least afraid of that. I think you've learnt your lesson."

He began to write. Leonard fumbled with ineffective words of remonstrance. He fidgeted nervously, determined not to let Kentish do what was in his mind. Suddenly George Kentish jumped up. It was astonishing that he should be the first to know that Constance Miles was standing in the study by the door.

" I'm having trouble with an obstinate husband," Kentish informed her. " I'll transfer the discussion to you, if you'll let me explain."

" You needn't. I've been listening for the last five minutes. You were too busy with the paper to notice when I came in."

Constance spoke gravely. But then she laughed. And George Kentish noted that her eyes were shining and that she stood very upright. She was not the same woman who had made confession to Kentish in his house. She had discovered Maud. A smile moved the lips of Kentish and danced for a second in his heart. She went across to her husband. Kentish scarcely heard her musing whisper, " Poor old Leonard ! "

" Touching this little matter of a holiday," began Kentish, without hesitation, and lifted a warning hand. " I'm in the chair—I don't want either of you to speak a word, please. I'm a faddy person, and I've got to be humoured. I've got money, and nothing to do with it."

" What ever are you talking about, Mr. Kentish ? "

Kentish looked at her, whipped out his watch, pretended to be flurried for time.

" It's quite simple, Mrs. Constance. Lord, I shall have to hurry ! Leonard's got to take you on a holiday—a real holiday—Mrs. Constance, as soon as he can find somebody to take his place for a Sunday or so. And the bill's mine. There's nothing more to be said. To please me ! "

He turned savagely on Leonard—on Leonard expostulating.

" I can't hear you ! Take hold of this—quick ! " Leonard making no movement, he stuffed the cheque into Leonard's nearest pocket. It's two hundred ; balance over the seventy is for holiday money. If you tear that up—if you don't present it before the end of this week—you'll lose me as a neighbour. I'll put the Court into the market and clear out of Cedarswood. Get me ? "

That was George Kentish. Always, they reflected, he meant what he said, meant whole-heartedly what he did. While they stood in silence, intently getting him, he glared at them both in turn.

" Aren't I godfather to your little Nancy ? " he half shouted. Then Constance moved.

" Won't you stay and let us try to thank you ? " she said.

Kentish threw back his head. " Thank me ! What for ? I'd love to stay, but I've something I must fix up in town. Good-bye, both of you. Mind you have a good time."

THEY would never forget it, either of them. They said so to each other many times.

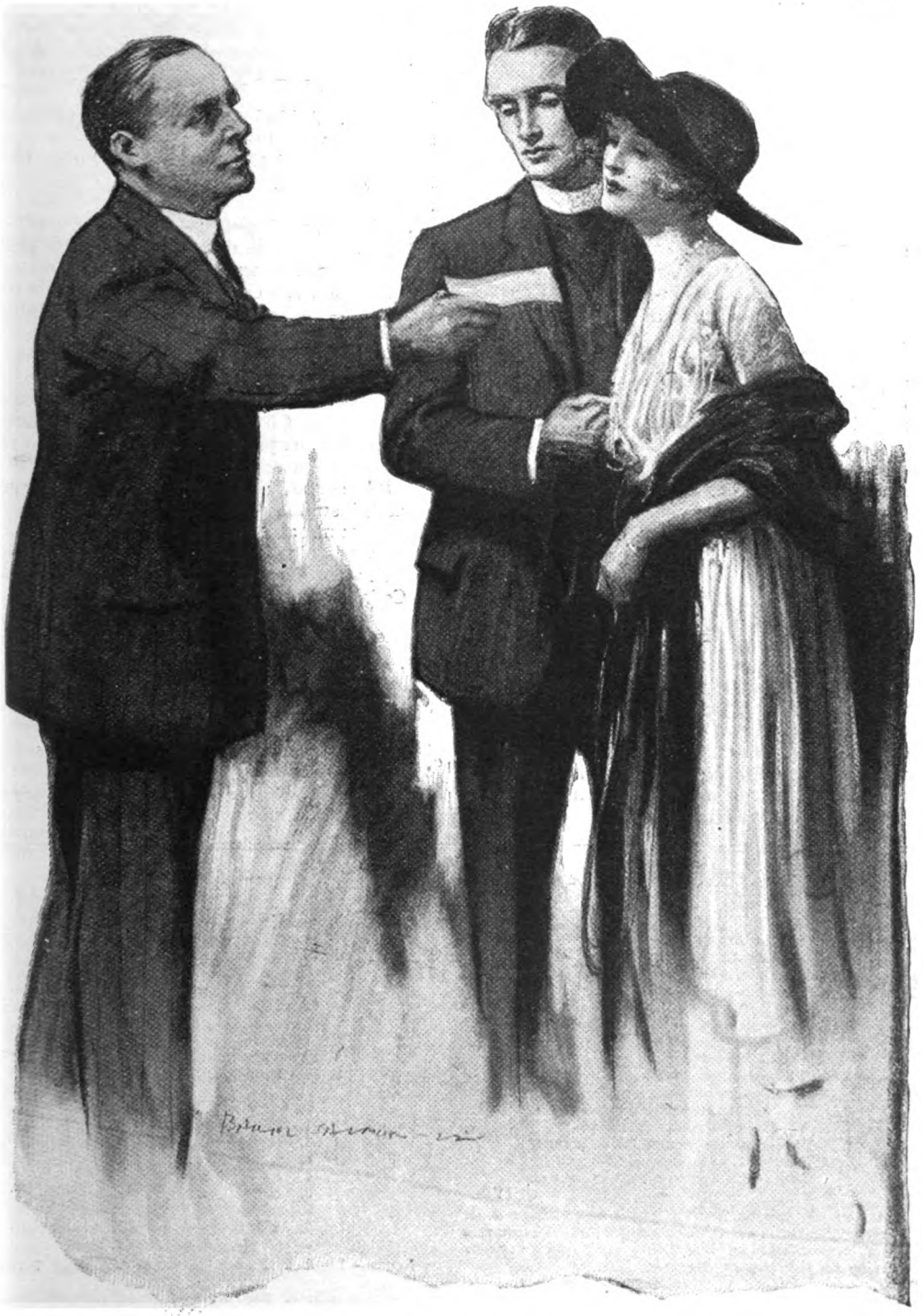
George Kentish drove his fast two-seater very fast to London—the same car in which he had patiently waited at the outlying post-office—waited for hours, till Leonard should come to send a telegram. His campaign was over. He glowed with success.

All the offices on the third floor, to which the lift took him, were his. George Kentish entered the small and beautiful room which was his private office. Here there were three prints of Hiroshige, two wonderful armchairs, and one Aubusson carpet of great merit. One shining tape-machine, at which George Kentish looked and frowned. A couple of favourites—the devil fly away with all favourites !—had won the last two races.

The sallow clerk who came at his summons was dressed to equal the appearance of a Prime Minister's secretary.

" Any news ? " asked Kentish.

" Not so good." About the black brushed head of the confidential clerk a shade of gloom was almost visible. " Some mug punter in a suburb called Cedarswood has done the dirty on the book. Miles, whoever he is. He's had the nerve to click the Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire double—we laid him two thousand pounds to two some weeks back—Odd Money and Double Blank."



"Leonard's got to take you on a holiday—a real holiday—Mrs. Constance. And the bill's mine. Take hold of this—quick!"

"Fluked the double, has he?" murmured Kentish, thoughtfully. "Well, what do you think of that?"

The clerk defined it angrily as a nasty jar. Kentish told him to bring the books.

He brought a big book, open at the name of Miles. Kentish dismissed him and sat down. George Kentish is Maud Scrutton; I hope you haven't guessed it. These serene and discreet offices in Old Yorke Street, the Daimler, the Rolls, and the two-seaters, the spreading gardens and the big house at Cedarswood called the Court, are all Maud's. Maud, the lucky wench, George Kentish, the merry well-doer, here in Old Yorke Street (and nowhere else) meet as one.

George Kentish took from his pocket the slip of tinted paper that recorded the winning bet. Already, in the book before him, neat round figures announced Maud Scrutton's indebtedness of two thousand pounds to Leonard Miles of Cedarswood. Kentish had studied the book on the previous afternoon. Five minutes before he had entered the Miles's house on this exciting day he had known that Leonard had backed the winner and won two thousand pounds.

Leonard Miles had successfully remembered only his *intention* to back Double Baulk. He had successfully forgotten that he had abandoned that intention and backed Double Blank instead. All the evidence of that glorious change of mind was in the slip George Kentish now inspected with a cheerful eye. *Double Blank*, the winner, seemed to leap from it in foot letters. He addressed the slip as though it were human.

"I was cold all over till I'd got hold of you, my darling," he told it, chattily. "And I kidded Leonard Miles he was on Double Baulk! Two thousand to a couple of measly jimmies—not likely! I ask you, *what* a forgetter!"

Silence. A kind of digestive silence, while a Corona was being procured from store, and on the wall the Japs of Hiroshige went blandly through their rice-fields and their rain.

Soliloquy, with puffs:—

"How do I stand? A hundred'll settle the fitments they want for their bazaar—and two hundred the cheque. Saved a solid two thousand—on balance I'm a clean seventeen hundred pounds up. Good enough!"

George Kentish rang the bell, took up a broad-nibbed pen, and splayed a thick line diagonally across the account of Leonard Miles, wrote CLOSED across it in huge, painstaking capitals. By this time the magnificent clerk looked on.

"I'll settle this man Miles's account myself," said Kentish. "And I'm closing his account altogether. Writing him; I don't want him to bet with me again. And I don't want any circulars sent to any address at Cedarswood in future. I've a reason."

"Bet you have," grinned the young nobleman, cheerfully. He was a privileged person. "They're a bit too hot for you down that quarter, what? Two thousand to two!"

IT'S an odd world, an unjust world. Business is business, sure enough. Isn't it nice to write a story where *everybody* is happy at the end? Even Maud!

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 110.
(The Second of the Series.)

MEN cling to place; in *first* for *last*
They stick, when usefulness is past.

1. They measure what you cannot see,
   And carriage free will guarantee.
2. In this, a princess comes to view:
   An insect small is in it, too.
3. On ground forbidden prone to rush;
   Though naught is in it, 'tis a crush.
4. Land where reversed is style behold,
   By footgear strangely crossed of old.
5. Vain talk; a poet would appear
   If stones enough were added here.
6. Not hard, as interposed; for you
   From midshipman may take your cue.

QUIVIS.

Answers to Acrostic No. 110 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on September 12th.

To every light one alternative answer may be sent; it should be written at the side. At the foot of his answer every solver should write his pseudonym and nothing else.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 109.

LEAVING town and work behind,
Leaving care of every kind,
Simple joys in life we prize—
Cloudless days and sunny skies.

1. Red was suit of thievish knave.
2. Greater part of Gallic grave.
3. Classic tongue, of bygone time.
4. Cornish saint, in riddling rhyme.
5. Mild expletive, mostly tree.
6. Elsewhere—oft a useful plea.
7. Money, turn a marshal round.
8. Scottish isle with heavenly sound.

PAX.

1.	H	eart	S
2.	O	mbea	U
3.	L	ati	N
4.	I	ve	S
5.	D	as	H
6.	A	lib	I
7.	Y	e	N
8.	S	ky	E

NOTES.—Light 2. French, *tombeau*. 5. Ash. 7. Marshal Ney.

The last light of No. 107 lends itself to a few other answers besides the published one, and these five words must be accepted: Three (Oneyer, Tyrone, Oenone); Tantalise and Tantalize (Tanrec, Talbot, Iseult, and Izeutz); Twenty-one (Tweeny, county, Oenone); Tatlanthe (Tatare, Lanark, Ianthe).

Falling in Love

He no longer sees the girl as she is; he sees the idealized image of her which love has created in his heart.

by

Arnold Bennett

THE CONTROL OF LOVE.

I WONDER how many people grow up with the fixed idea that love is a thing which human intelligence cannot effectively control? The percentage of citizens—and especially Anglo-Saxon citizens—thus deceived about a vital matter must be very large. We probably get our notions concerning love and falling in love from the sentimental drawing-room ballad, which, at any rate in Britain, has an immense influence over the private dreams of the population. (There is no sentimental drawing-room ballad in France—or none to speak of, and the institution of the ballad concert is entirely unknown there.)

In the sentimental drawing-room ballad one special girl awaits one special young man; they meet by accident or by the will of the gods; at the meeting she looks into his eyes, he into hers; a miracle happens; and they both know that from that moment their two lives were changed for ever and ever, and also that no other girl could have had the wondrous effect that that special girl had on that special youth, and *vice versâ*. They know further that the affair could not have been avoided, love being a sort of inscrutable higher power tyrannizing over human beings, and that nothing on earth matters except the one supreme fact of love.

The sentimental drawing-room ballad regards love as mankind used to regard disease and pestilence—that is to say, as a visitation, vastly more agreeable, of course, than an epidemic of smallpox, but nevertheless a visitation, which mortals did not cause and

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cannot cure—something similar to a thunderstorm or a flood. All delusions have some basis of truth, and the delusion propagated by the sentimental drawing-room ballad can occasionally find justification for itself in certain very odd and striking phenomena; but broadly speaking it does not at all correspond to life as we know life, and it has been the cause of more unhappy and tedious marriages than anything else since marriage was invented. I might put the case more strongly, but I will not do so, lest I should anger the ballad-loving Anglo-Saxon publics, who love to dwell upon the alleged awful ravages of love, and upon the helplessness of love's victims, and upon the futility of trying to escape love when Love has made up his mind to have you.

Falling in love, being in love, loving—three stages of a single process—constitute often an exceedingly fine experience, possibly the finest of all worldly experiences. The experience, however, does not lie entirely beyond human control. Nor is it generally, or often, productive of more happiness than unhappiness. It sometimes is, but not frequently. This statement contains no cynicism; it is the fruit of quite benevolent observation, and few really mature impartial observers would challenge it. I am, nevertheless, well aware that it will infuriate a considerable proportion of readers—men as well as women.

Love, despite the sentimental drawing-room ballad, is usually determined by individual circumstances of a material kind. For example, if a man who has been too poor to marry comes into a sufficient income, the chances are a hundred to one that soon afterwards he will be in love with some likely girl. You may argue that the thing was a coincidence, and that he would have been in love with that young woman anyhow. But is it not far more probable that he fell in love because he was ready to fall in love—in other words, because he had deliberately prepared himself to fall in love?

Similarly, a man who begins to find life a bore will fall in love.

And, conversely, a man who finds his existence full and interesting, an ambitious man, will not fall in love. He misses the visitation because he does not want it.

Again, a man who has been baulked in a love affair will fall in love a second time within a brief period, for the reason that he wanted, not a particular girl, but love itself. He had tasted it and he was determined to get his fill of it.

Instances could easily be multiplied to illustrate the broad truth that people who want to fall in love will fall in love, and those who don't, won't. So far from Cupid running after you with a bow and arrow, you must run after Cupid and bare your breast and entreat the fellow to shoot if you desire to feel the dart. I admit willingly that there are exceptions to this proposition. Now and then an individual may be positively struck down by love in a highly inconvenient and even tragic manner. He may curse, and strive against it, and still be conquered by it. But this individual is very rare—save in ballads.

As for the ballad theory that every youth and every girl has his or her particular "fate," and unless or until he or she meets that "fate" his or her life cannot be "fulfilled," it is as certain as anything human can be that in the average happy marriage the husband would have been equally happy with any one of ten thousand other women, and the wife with any one of ten thousand other men. (And when I say ten thousand I am understating!) The choice of a partner is seldom due to aught but fortuitous circumstances. If each individual has his "fate," it is extremely curious that his fate so often happens to be living in the same town, or even in the same street!

Am I seeking to rob life and love of their romance? Assuredly I am not. Life and love are incredibly and incurably romantic, and the more honestly you examine them the more romantic they seem. A man does not find his "fate." He takes a woman—one of tens of thousands—and gradually fashions her *into* his unique fate. Is not this astonishing process more romantic than the prosaic business of lighting on her by accident ready-made?

THAT nearly every man has a very large measure of control over the love which may make or spoil him cannot be doubted. In order effectively to exercise that control he must give his mind to the subject of love and its probable influence upon his career. This does not mean that he must spend his days in dreaming of the delights of love. It means that he must begin by putting certain questions to himself and answering them as sincerely as he can. On the other hand, it does not mean that he must try to lay down a plan of love as he might lay down the plan of a career. No! Love is a ticklish and incalculable affair; it cannot be reduced to a formula; it cannot, without absurdity, be approached exclusively in a spirit of pure logic; it may easily upset the schemes of hard common sense. But it is in general amenable to the suggestions of sagacity. And, seeing its importance, its beauty, its magnificence, its romance, its immense consequences, every effort should be made by the reasoning faculty to guide it wisely.

Now the young man who is not a fool

will first decide whether or not he is ready for love. He will deliberately decide it; and no jeering of sentimentalists shall move me from this statement.

Is it better to marry earlier or later? It is unanswerably better to marry earlier, provided that the material basis for marriage exists. It is better because it is more natural, because it is more healthy, because it is more agreeable, because the young more easily accommodate themselves to one another, and because their offspring have in every way a better chance on earth.

But none of these considerations can properly weigh against the absence of a suitable material basis. If the income of the married couple would be inadequate to the needs of wedlock and is without a fair prospect of improvement, or if the income is precarious and unreliable, then no marriage could rightly take place, despite anything that ballads may assert to the contrary.

And if no marriage can rightly take place, then the young man must decide that he is not ready for love, and get himself into a frame of mind accordingly. The frame of mind duly arrived at, he will be much less liable to fall in love, no matter how splendid may be the girls he meets! Thus he will save himself, and perhaps another, from a lot of trouble which a less prudent young man might unreflectingly tumble into.

Of course, there may be cases in which a young man who has both the material basis and the desire for marriage would still be foolish to adopt the frame of mind favourable to love. Such a case is that of the ambitious man who has sworn to rise high in the world. If this man marries young he may discover that his wife, through no fault of her own, is incapable of rising with him. Too early marriages have marred the lives of countless ambitious men—and of not a few ambitious women.

CHOOSING.

Let us assume that a young man is in a position to marry, and that he has reflected, not unfavourably, about the state of marriage, and that he has the ordinary facilities for encountering young women. That young man is almost certain to meet fairly soon a young woman concerning whom his first thought will be: "She is not a bad sort." We say: "He has taken a fancy to her," but the situation would be more correctly described by the words: "His fancy has been taken."

Now here is the moment of peril. If at this moment circumstances arose which prevented him from ever seeing the girl again, he would not suffer. No harm has been done. The strange little microbe is only on the surface as yet; it has not penetrated into the system; it can be brushed off. Reason and judgment are still in control of the proceedings. The young man ought to realize, and can easily realize by an effort of detachment, that he is playing with fire. He ought to realize that he may be

They meet by accident; a miracle happens.

at a crisis of his life, and that within the next few weeks things may have happened in his heart which will affect profoundly the whole of his career. He ought not to conduct himself lightly.

Yet few young men do in fact realize these matters. The average young man just goes carelessly on, listening to his fancy alone. He will see that girl again. He does see her again. In a couple of months, even if not betrothed, his affections may be so deeply involved that reason has ceased to be in command of the proceedings. He no longer sees the girl as she is; he sees the idealized image of her which love has created in his heart. He no longer sees the pros and cons of the tremendous and endless enterprise which we call marriage; he sees only the pros, and he sees them greatly exaggerated.

The affair, of course, may turn out excellently well; but if it does he is lucky—not meritorious, because he has neglected the early precautions which he ought to have taken.

The lesson is: that if reason is to act in a love affair, it must act in the earliest stages, or it cannot act at all. By deliberate thought and intention reason can be made to act, and its operation will be invaluable.

How should reason act? At the very start, before the matches have even been brought into the chamber where the powder-barrel lies, the young man should say to himself: "I am thinking about that girl. Before I go any farther let me think seriously and widely; dreaming about the attractiveness of her is not serious thinking. I must stand on one side and try to see the situation as a third person would see it."

The first point for his attention is this: From the inception of any love affair, a continuous process of falsification is going on. The girl is showing the best of herself and hiding the worst of herself. She cannot help doing so. Sometimes she does it unconsciously, but as a rule she does it quite deliberately. She is anxious to please; she is anxious to be esteemed and liked—whether or not she regards the young man favourably as a suitor. He is not seeing the girl in full, and it is impossible that he should see her in full. And even the carefully selected portions of her individuality which he does see are seen by him through the rose-coloured glasses of his excited fancy. If he marries her he is certain to experience disillusion, because he has been asking for it.

Further, the young man himself, precisely like the girl, is showing the best of himself and hiding the worst of himself. Both parties, therefore, are being continuously misled, and the disillusion will be mutual.

Let the young man reflect upon this, so that his enthusiasm may be duly tempered. Let him also reflect that, just as in the project of marriage he is "out" mainly for his own interests, so is the girl "out" for her own interests. Drawing-room ballads notwithstanding, love and self-interest are quite compatible. The simple realization of this unquestionable truth will help the young man to judge with more reason and less passion than otherwise he could do.

A GREAT deal depends upon the circumstances in which the first meetings occur. If these, as often happens, are in a resort of pleasure, the difficulties of true judgment are gravely increased. A girl who is ideal at a social entertainment may be a very different girl in the eternal dailiness of marriage. (And be it ever remembered that marriage is about seventy-five per cent. humdrum, twenty per cent. troublesome complications, and a bare five per cent. festivity of one kind or another.)

The girl is excited. The young man is excited. The material available for wise judgment is very meagre. The young man, however, can trust to at any rate three symptoms. If she is obviously a devotee of pleasure, beware, for she cannot fail to be disappointed—with the usual results upon character. If she shows no thought for what he is spending with her or on her, beware, for either she is selfish or she is incapable of putting herself in his place. Thirdly, if she speaks ill of women in general, beware, for she is a woman herself. And in this connection I will add that if the young man catches himself thinking that by a most fortunate chance she is free from the characteristic feminine faults, let him rule out the notion instantly. She is not. No woman is. A woman may have these faults in a greater or less degree, but she has them, and if the young man does not discover this soon he will discover it too late. The same, naturally, is true of men. (Yes, young man, all men, including yourself, have characteristic masculine defects of character.)

If the early meetings occur in a place of business, under business conditions, the chances of a sound judgment are considerably strengthened. But the young man should see the young woman in her own home, difficult though this often is to arrange in the preliminary stages. And if her own home is not satisfactory, let him guard against imagining that she has escaped all the faults of her family. She hasn't; and to imagine such an absurdity is a sure symptom that the young man is losing his head and his reasoning faculty about her.

In any case, the young man should take measures, however awkward they may be.

to see her in prosaic circumstances, and circumstances which are apt to be trying for her. circumstances which ordinarily do bring to the surface the roots of the character. He can even create these circumstances himself.

And, lastly, he should meditate upon the possibility that he is not the seeker but the sought. He may fancy that he is about to choose the girl, whereas the fact is that the girl is about to choose him. He may conceive himself as playing the active *rôle*, whereas in truth he may be playing the passive *rôle*. The nature of men and women is such that a girl can just as easily select and mark down and capture a man as a man can select and mark down and capture a woman. Provided that a girl has a fair amount of charm and is suitably situated as regards material conditions, she can, in my firm belief, win almost any man she chooses—and this without in the least departing from the rules laid down by society for the deportment of nice girls.

There are those who will here protest, and perhaps violently, that, in spite of my previous assurances to the contrary, I am, as a fact, in the above suggestions, committing an outrage upon love, trying to make love a matter of cold calculation, and Heaven knows what else. But it is not so. I wish merely to insist, first, that love is not uncontrollable in its first manifestations, and, second, that, while it is controllable, it ought in the interests of individual and general happiness to be controlled so far as possible by the guidance of reason.

Love is, I believe, the greatest and the finest phenomenon in human life; its influence is tremendous; nothing transcends it in importance. Why should reason and deliberate judgment be excluded from it at the very moment when they can make themselves useful? Some people seem to think that it is a grand thing to throw oneself blindly into romantic danger and to risk the welfare of a lifetime in an hour of abandonment. I do not agree, and I doubt whether the said persons are wholly sincere. I behold them as the victims of the sentimental drawing-room ballad. Reason, I admit, cannot do everything in love. No man, however young and omniscient, can completely arrange his heart's destiny by taking thought. Love cannot be treated as an algebraic equation. But Reason can emphatically do something—and something worth doing—to lessen the risks of a disaster, if only she is called into consultation soon enough.

Girls have immense advantages. A beautiful or a charming girl, in order to be admired, has simply to *be*; a man, in order to be admired, must *do*.

THE WOMAN'S CASE.

So far I have, at any rate in appearance,

regarded the matter from the man's point of view; and in the acid judgment of ardent feminists I may have had the air of treating the wonderful preliminaries to marriage as a struggle of calculation in which the man should be encouraged to do the very best he can for himself while ignoring the claims of the woman. Such is not my attitude. Nearly all the suggestions which I have offered for the conduct of young men I would offer with equal vehemence for the conduct of girls in this great and critical affair; and indeed, with the necessary changes of detail, they can obviously be applied with at least as much force to the woman's case as to the man's. If a man should give heed, a woman should give more heed.

Some say that modern social conditions have fundamentally changed the girl's relation to the man. They have changed it, but not fundamentally. In essentials it remains the same as it was. A girl can now earn her own living; she has freedom, including the freedom to think for herself; she is not so afraid as she used to be of becoming an old maid. She has a far larger choice of men than her ancestress, merely because she goes about more. True! But she cannot earn her own living as well as a man; with all her new freedom she has less freedom than a man; and she still has a horror of becoming an old maid, whereas men still contemplate with perfect calm the prospect of becoming old bachelors. The crucial fact is that maidens still hanker after the wedded state a great deal more than young men do. Further, there are more maids than young men.

The theory, launched in various quarters, that girls are no longer particularly interested in marriage, that they prefer their salaried work to the hard labour of housekeeping and rearing children, and that if the truth were known they would prefer not to marry—this theory does not at all accord with the evidence of my eyes daily seen. I am quite ready to call it a grotesque theory, invented by persons whose visual organs are in grave need of an oculist. The differences of sex survive, and are likely to continue to survive for quite some years yet.

GIRLS have immense advantages; on their own ground men cannot touch them. A beautiful or a charming girl, in order to be admired, has simply to *be;* a man, in order to be admired, must *do*. And the husband, in the majority of marriages, has the sole financial responsibility; the wife's responsibility in spending is less serious in the same degree as creating is less serious than dissipating. On the other hand, girls have immense disadvantages. They grow old! For many of them, if not for most, this is a genuine tragedy. Their share in the vast business of producing the next generation is incomparably heavier than that of men. And also, whatever their financial independence may have been before marriage, they generally lose it after marriage. Financially, the average wife is little better than helpless.

On the whole, I consider that the disadvantages of being a woman outweigh the advantages. I think that women, during the major part of their lives, have a somewhat harder time of it than men. I have not yet met a man who really regretted that he had not been born a woman; but I have met many and many a woman who really regretted that she had not been born a man.

Finally, marriage is always a captivity; it may be and often is delightful, unique in its satisfactoriness; but it is a captivity, and sometimes a terrible captivity. And nearly invariably it is more of a captivity for the wife than for the husband.

Hence we arrive at the triple conclusion: that maidens desire marriage more than men do; that, being numerically superior, they have a more restricted choice than men; and that as a consequence of her financial dependence and of her liabilities as a mother, an unsuccessful marriage will bear more hardly upon the wife than upon the husband.

I maintain, therefore, that the girl has more cause even than the young man to bring her reason into play immediately and without the slightest delay when her affections begin to be engaged. I doubt whether a woman is less calculating than a man before her affections are caught, but I am quite sure that, once her affections are caught, she can be more devoted than a man, more sacrificial, and more capable of grief.

It would be absurd to attempt general advice to women about men. Tastes differ infinitely, and there are mysteries in marriage incomprehensible save to the two people chiefly concerned. No one can safely predict that a given man will not prove satisfactory to a given woman.

But one generalization may be suggested without excessive rashness. Beware of any man whom men do not like. Such men often please women; they absolutely fascinate women; they seem to mesmerize; they are adored to the point of ecstasy. But never for long. A moment always comes when the woman learns, as a rule to her cost, that the general masculine judgment was right. There may be exceptions to this rule, but for myself I have not met one.

I would venture no other generalization. All else that can be said in this connection amounts to a vague warning against shutting the eyes and rushing forward until the heart has obtained complete control and reason has been reduced to a nonentity.

A queer false shame adversely influences the earthly relations of a man and a girl who have at the back of their minds some idea of ultimately marrying each other. And the girl usually has more of this false shame than the man. Conversations, instead of being serious, are superficial; and the exhibition of a legitimate curiosity on vital matters is genteelly avoided. The girl should acquire knowledge concerning not merely the financial status of the possible man, but about his health and about his tastes, particularly about his tastes. For she will be more at the mercy of his tastes than he of hers.

Of course, no social interchanges can go on without some useful information being obtained. And yet it is astonishing, it is pathetic, the small quantity of information that actually is obtained. Lots of couples enter into the most solemn compact that exists, and they know no more of each other than their respective preferences in furniture and in theatrical entertainments.

And now, when, for good or evil, the choice has been made and the compact sealed, the young woman should bethink herself conscientiously of a matter which has a greater influence upon the success or failure of marriage than anything else lying outside the affections. Before he is accepted as a *fiancé*, the young man must put his cards on the table. He must reasonably demonstrate his ability to maintain a wife and a household in a satisfactory manner. If he cannot demonstrate this there is trouble, and he may be asked what he impudently means by expecting a girl accustomed to comfort and all the proprieties to entrust herself to his incompetent arms. He expects to be called upon for this demonstration, and neither he nor anybody else is surprised at the insistence on the ordeal. But supposing that, when the couple had arrived at an unspoken or spoken understanding, the young man's mother were to send for the young woman and say to her: "You want to marry my son. Which means that you will have to run his house for him and bring up his children. I must request you to prove to me that you can run a house, manage servants, buy food economically, cook it attractively, make rooms attractive, keep order, be punctual," etc., etc.

Naturally the girl would be startled.

But she would have no right to be startled. The error into which innumerable girls fall is of expecting the man to bring various important things to the marriage while forgetting that they, too, have responsibilities to discharge and duties to fulfil in an accomplished manner. Girls are too apt to imagine that in giving their hearts they have given all that the mutual bargain of marriage demands from them. It very emphatically is not so.

"You want to marry my son. I must request you to prove to me that you can run a house."

Love is enormous; but love is not enough. To be a wife is a profession, and a skilled and a learned profession at that. While she is engaged in loving the young woman should also be engaged in more material and earthly affairs. And you may cry out against reason and practicality and mechanical household efficiency as much as you please—there is nothing like these for supporting and preserving love in its fight against time.

The tendency of the age is towards marriages of reason. A good tendency! But courtships of reason are equally to be desired.

MR. ARNOLD BENNETT'S NEXT ARTICLE WILL DEAL WITH "MARRIAGE."

THE SINISTER QUEST OF NORMAN GREYES

by

E·PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES CROMBIE

No. 10.—THE MYSTERY ADVERTISEMENT.

MICHAEL TELLS THE WHOLE STORY.

IT has always been my custom, as a notorious and much-sought-after criminal, to give special care to the building up of a new identity. It is my success in the various impersonations I have attempted which has enabled me for many years to completely puzzle that highly astute body of men leagued together under the auspices of Scotland Yard.

After my brief but successful career as Colonel Escombe, of the Indian Army, I determined upon a complete change of characterization and circumstances. I established myself in modest rooms at the back of Russell Square, took a small office at the top of a block of buildings in Holborn, had cards and stationery printed and a brass plate engraved, and made a fresh appearance in the Metropolis of my fancy as Mr. Sidney Buckross, jobbing stationer. I cannot say that my operations made very much impression upon the trade which I had adopted. I transferred a thousand pounds to my credit at a well-known London bank, wrote myself several letters a day, which I opened and replied to at my office, sallied out with a small black bag soon after ten, and, with the exception of a leisurely hour for my midday meal, spent the rest of my time in the safe seclusion of the British Museum.

I re-established a new hobby. In the intervals of idleness which the spasmodic activities of my profession had entailed, I had always been fascinated by the subject of ciphers. I knew perfectly well, for instance, that half the advertisements in the Personal Column of the *Times* contained, to the person for whose eyes they were intended, a meaning utterly different from their obvious one. For example, one afternoon, after having wasted a score of sheets of paper and an immense amount of ingenuity, I was able at last to find the real message conveyed under this absurd medley of words :—

"*Charles. What you require may be found in* 1749. *Laughing Eyes bids you have courage. Bring James.*"

With only one word of the cipher at first clear to me, I looked upon it as something of a triumph when I was able to extract from this rubbish the following message :—

"*Lady in green, man dinner jacket and white tie. Frascati's* 8 *o'clock Monday. Will bring documents. Have currency.*"

The announcement interested me. If these documents were worth money to the person to whom this invitation was addressed, they were probably worth money to me. I decided, without a moment's hesitation, that I would meet the lady in green and the gentleman in a dinner coat and white tie on Monday at Frascati's, notwithstanding the shock to my sartorial instincts which the costume of the latter was likely to inflict. My only trouble was, not to clash with the person for whom the advertisement was really intended. At this I could only make an attempt. I inserted the following advertisement in the Personal Column of the *Times* on the following morning :—

"Frascati's 7 not 8."

The upshot I was compelled to leave to fate.

AT ten minutes to seven on Monday evening I arrived at the restaurant indicated. I ordered a table for three and the best dinner the place could offer. The moment I stepped back into the reception-room I recognized, beyond a shadow of

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doubt, my prospective guests. The man was a powerful-looking fellow, with large, clumsy limbs, a mass of untidy hair, a bushy brown moustache streaked with grey, a somewhat coarse complexion, and bulbous eyes. He wore, gracelessly, the costume which the advertisement had indicated. The woman in green had somewhat overdone her colour scheme. There was a green plush band in her hair and she wore an evening gown of the same colour, cut very low and distinguished by a general air of tawdriness. She was, or rather had been, good-looking in a bold, flamboyant sort of way, and she had still a profusion of yellow hair. They both stared at me when they saw me looking around, and with a little inward shiver I took the plunge. I went boldly up to them and shook hands.

"I have ordered dinner," I announced. "Will you let me show you the way?"

They accepted the situation without demur, and viewed the gold-topped bottle in the ice-pail, and the other arrangements for their entertainment, with considerable satisfaction.

"I must say you're not quite the sort of chap we expected to find, is he, Lizzie?" the man remarked, as he seated himself heavily and performed wonderful operations with his napkin. "I thought all your lot were water drinkers."

I smiled.

"We are often misunderstood," I ventured.

WE settled down and took stock of one another. The woman looked approvingly at my black tie and pearl studs. I have made it a rule never to be without a supply of the right sort of clothes.

"I'm sure, if I may say so, it's much more agreeable to do business with a gentleman," she remarked, with a sidelong glance at me. "Makes one feel so much more at home."

"Cocktails, too!" her companion exclaimed, cheerfully, as the wine waiter approached with a silver tray. "You're doing us proud and no mistake."

I bowed and drank their healths. A cordial but cryptic silence seemed to me to be my best *rôle*. I had always the fear, however, of the other man arriving before the business part of our meeting had been broached. So as soon as the effects of the wine had begun to show themselves in some degree, I ordered another bottle and leaned confidentially forward.

"You have brought the documents with you?" I asked.

"You don't think we are out to make an April fool of a gentleman like you!" the lady replied, with a languishing glance. "But I would like you to understand this, Mr.—Mr.——"

"Martin," I suggested.

"Mr. Martin," she went on. "I would never have rounded on Ted if he had kept straight. He and I didn't get on, and that's the long and short of it. He was all right so far as the drink was concerned, and I never saw him look at another woman in his life. All the same, Mr. Martin, for a woman of my temperament he was no fitting sort of a husband."

I felt a moment's sympathy for Ted. The lady, however, had more to say.

"When first he started those proceedings for divorce," she went on, dropping her voice a little and adopting a more intimate manner, "I was knocked altogether silly like. You know that, Jim, wasn't I?" she added, appealing to her male companion.

"Same here," he growled. "I'd have broken his blooming 'ead if I'd thought he was having us watched."

"And it's a broken head he'll get, the way he's going on, if he's not careful," the woman continued, truculently. "Talk about making him a Cabinet Minister, indeed, and me left without a penny just because he got his divorce! I'll show him!"

"To revert for a moment to the documents," I ventured.

The lady touched a soiled, shabby handbag, opened it, and gazed inside for a moment.

"They're here all right," she announced in a tone of satisfaction. "Mixed up with my powder and rouge and what not. You shall have them presently, Mr. Martin."

"That is, if you are prepared to part," the man intervened. "Cash down and no humbug about it."

"Part? Of course he's prepared to part!" the woman declared, sharply. "Wouldn't be here if he weren't. That's right, isn't it, Mr. Martin?"

"Naturally," I agreed. "I have brought a considerable amount of money with me, quite as much as I can afford to part with, and the only question left for me to decide is whether the documents are worth it."

"You talk as if you were doing this little job on your own," she remarked, looking at me curiously.

"I have to be as careful as though I were," I replied. "I am sure you can understand that."

Her escort laughed coarsely.

"I guess you'll see there's some pickings left for yourself," he observed. "You know what I heard your boss say at Liverpool once."

"That will do, Jim," the woman interrupted, impatiently. "Remember we are here for business."

I returned to the subject of our meeting.

"I think," I suggested, "the time has arrived when you might allow me to glance through those documents."

The woman looked across the table at her companion. He nodded assent.

"No harm in that, so far as I can see," he observed. "There's all in them as I promised, and a trifle more. Enough to cook Ted's goose, and his swell friend's."

The woman opened her hand-bag and produced a dozen pages of typewritten manuscript, soiled and a little tattered.

"Just cast your eye over that first," she invited. "That's an exact copy of the speech which Ted prepared for the mass meeting in Liverpool in March."

"In Liverpool," I repeated, hoping for some elucidation.

"The meeting that was called to decide upon the shipping strike," she explained, a little impatiently.

I glanced through the typewritten pages. They seemed to consist of a vehement appeal to the dockers, bonders, and Union of Seamen to inaugurate on the following day the greatest strike in history, promising them the support of the miners and railwaymen, and predicting the complete defeat of the Government within six weeks. The speech concluded with a peroration full of extreme revolutionary sentiments, and on a blank page at the end, under the heading of "Approved of," were the signatures of a dozen of the best-known men in the Labour world.

"This speech——" I began, tentatively, for the matter was not yet clear to me.

"Was never delivered, of course," the man interrupted. "You know all about that. Ted went down to Liverpool as mild as a lamb. He stood up there on the platform and told them that the present moment was inopportune for a strike. Not only that, but the next day he bamboozled them into accepting the employers' terms."

"Satisfactory so far as it goes," I observed didactically, but with caution. "And now ——"

"If we make a deal and you part with these documents to me, what use do you expect me to make of them?"

"Any use you choose, so long as you pay enough," the woman answered, bluntly.

"Here," the woman interrupted triumphantly, "is Lord Kindersley's letter, delivered to Ted that afternoon in Liverpool."

I read the letter, dated from South Audley Street, and its opening phrases were illuminative. I knew now that Ted was Mr. Edward Rendall, the present leader of the Labour Party in the House of Commons.

"*My dear Mr. Rendall,*" it began,

"*This letter, which I am dispatching by aeroplane messenger, will reach you, I*

trust, before you address the meeting this evening. The matter with which it is concerned cannot be dealt with by the Federation of Shipowners, but, confirming our recent conversations, Sir Philip Richardson and I are willing, between us, to advance to-morrow bank-notes to the value of fifty thousand pounds, to be paid to the funds of your cause

or to be made use of in any way you think fit, provided the strike threatened for to-morrow does not take place.

Faithfully yours,

GEOFFREY KINDERSLEY.

P.S.—In your own interests, as well as ours, I suggest that you immediately destroy this letter.

Things were now becoming quite clear to me. I even began to wonder if I had brought enough money.

"As a matter of curiosity," I asked, "why did your husband not take Lord Kindersley's advice and destroy this letter?"

The woman laughed unpleasantly. There was mingled cunning and self-satisfaction in her expression.

"He told me to," she replied. "As a matter of fact, he thought he saw me tear it up. It was just at the time that I was beginning to have my suspicions of Master Ted, so I tore up a circular instead, and put this by for a bit."

"A pretty clever stroke of work, too," the man opposite murmured, with an approving grin. "You put a rod in pickle for Ted that day, Lizzie."

"And serve him right, too," the lady remarked, glancing in her mirror and making some trifling rearrangement of her coiffure.

There was a brief silence. The man drew his chair a little closer to the table and addressed me with a business-like air.

"Now, Mr. Martin, or whatever your name is, let's finish this job up," he proposed. "You've got a copy of the speech that Ted Rendall promised his pals to deliver at Liverpool, typed at Mrs. Simons's office, number twenty-three, Dale Street. You've got the original letter from Lord Kindersley, proving up to the hilt why he didn't deliver it, and," he went on, striking the table with his fist, "I am now going to tell you that that fifty thousand pounds was handed over to Ted at the National Liberal Club the following evening at six o'clock, and was paid in by him, to his own credit, to five different banks on the following morning. The names of the banks are there, in pencil, on the back of Lord Kindersley's letter."

"And when I asked him for a hundred a year to keep me respectable," the woman declared, with an angry colour rising to her cheeks, "he sent my letter back through his lawyers, without a word."

I leaned back in my chair and felt my way a little farther.

"If we make a deal and you part with these documents to me," I said, "what use do you expect me to make of them?"

"Any use you choose, so long as you pay enough," the woman answered, bluntly.

"We know pretty well whom you're acting for," the man put in, with a knowing grin. "I guess it won't be long before

Charlie Payton handles these documents, if we come to terms."

"You have no conditions to make?" I asked.

"None!" the woman snapped. "I've finished with Ted. He's a cur. You can publish the whole lot in the papers if you like, for all I care."

"Then there remains only the question of price," I concluded.

The flush of wine and the momentary expansiveness of good feeding seemed to pass from the faces of my two guests. A natural and anxious cupidity took its place. They feared to ask too little; they were terrified lest they might scare me away by asking too much.

"They'd be worth a pretty penny to Ted," the woman muttered.

"You don't want to sell them to him," I pointed out.

"I don't, and that's a fact," she admitted. "Look here, Mr. Martin, they're yours for a thousand pounds."

A thousand pounds was precisely the sum I had brought with me. Without remark, I counted out the notes and pocketed the documents. The man and woman seemed very surprised at this uneventful finish to the proceedings. The latter tucked away the notes in her handbag whilst I paid the bill. When I rose to take leave of them I could see, standing in the doorway and looking at us with a puzzled expression, a middle-aged man who I decided at once was the individual whom I had impersonated.

"The business is over, and, I trust, pleasantly," I said. "Will you forgive me if I take my leave? There are others who are anxious to hear from me."

The woman clutched her bag with her left hand and extended her right.

"Well, I'm sure you've been quite the gentleman, Mr.—Mr.—let me see, what was the name?"

"Well, it doesn't matter, does it," I replied, "especially as it was only assumed for the evening. Good night and good luck to you both," I added, as I made my escape.

There was a fine rain falling outside, but I walked steadily on, obsessed with the sudden desire for fresh air. The atmosphere of the place I had left, the character of my companions, the sordid ignominy of the transaction which I had just concluded, had filled me with disgust. Then I began to laugh softly to myself. It was a queer anomaly, this, that I, the notorious criminal for whom the police of the world were always searching, should feel distaste at so ordinary an ill-deed. I had robbed, and struck ruthlessly enough, in my time, at whoever might stand in my way, but, as a matter of fact, blackmailing was the one malpractice which had never happened to come my way. In any case, as I reminded myself, the ignominious part of the affair was over. Its continuation was likely to appeal more both to my sense of humour and my natural instinct for cruelty. Over a late whisky-and-soda that night in my room, I began to build my plans. It seemed to me that the career of Mr. Edward Rendall, M.P., and the reputation of Lord Kindersley were equally in my hands. It was surely not possible that the two combined would not produce a reasonable profit upon my outlay of a thousand pounds. As I sat and smoked another idea occurred to me, and before I retired to rest I wrote a long letter of instructions to Mr. Younghusband.

I REMAINED at my office in Holborn on the following morning until I heard from Mr. Younghusband upon the telephone. As usual he was most formal, addressing me as though I were one of his ordinary and respected clients. It was obvious, however, that he was perturbed.

"I have carried out your instructions to the letter, Mr.—er—Buckross," he announced, "but the magnitude of the operation which you have ventured upon has, I confess, rather staggered me."

"Let me know exactly what you have done," I said.

"I have sold," he continued, "on your account, through various firms of stockbrokers, twenty-five thousand ordinary shares in the Kindersley Shipping Company at six pounds each. Fortunately, there is no immediate prospect of a rise in shares of this description, and I was able to arrange to leave cover amounting to only ten shillings a share—namely, twelve thousand five hundred pounds."

"Very good," I assented. "What is the price just now?"

"The shares have dropped a trifle, naturally," the lawyer replied, "owing to your operations. The stockbroker, however, at whose office I now am, advises me to disregard that fact. He thinks that they will probably recover during the day."

"Just so! When is settlement day?"

"On the fourth. Apropos of that, the various brokers with whom I have had dealings on your behalf desire to know whether you would wish to close your transactions, or any portion of them, during the next few days if a profit of, say, a quarter a share is shown."

"Not on any account," I insisted. "The transaction must remain exactly as it is until I give the word."

I rang off, filled my bag, as usual, with stationery samples, and took the Tube to Bond Street, whence I walked to South

Audley Street. Upon arrival at my destination, I was informed, by an imposing-looking butler, that Lord Kindersley was at home, but it was scarcely likely that he would receive me unless I had an appointment. I risked the butler's being human, and bought my way as far as the waiting-room. Once arrived there, I managed to impress an untidy and bespectacled secretary with the idea that it might be worth Lord Kindersley's while to spare me a few minutes of his time. In the end I was ushered into the great man's sanctum.

"What can I do for you—er—Mr. Buckross?" he inquired, glancing at my card.

I was anxious to test my new identity and I stood full in the light. It was obvious, however, that Lord Kindersley had not an idea that we had ever met before. He did not connect the slightly nervous business man who now addressed him with the woodman-chauffeur who had brought him safely from the Forêt du Dom to England.

"I have come to see you on a very serious matter, Lord Kindersley," I said, "and I am anxious that there should be no misunderstanding. I do not wish for a penny of your money. I am here, in fact, to save you from the loss of a great deal of it. My visit, nevertheless, has a very serious side."

He looked at me steadily from under his bushy eyebrows.

"Go on," he invited, curtly.

"Last March," I continued, "you averted the threatened shipping strike and saved yourself the loss of at least one of your millions by bribing a well-known Labour leader to declare for peace instead of war. You and one other great shipowner were alone concerned in this matter. That other man, I gather, is dead."

Lord Kindersley was looking at me with a queer look in his eyes. I realized suddenly how heavily pouched they were underneath, how unwholesome the power of his face. His voice, when he answered me, was unsteady.

"What on earth are you talking about?"

I TOOK the two documents from my pocket and moved a little nearer to him.

"Here," I said, "is Rendall's proposed speech, counselling the strike and signed by the leaders of the various Unions. Here, also, is your letter to Rendall, making him the offer of fifty thousand pounds to withhold it, which sum was paid to him the next evening at the National Liberal Club."

All the initial affability and condescension had gone from Lord Kindersley's manner. He looked like a man on the verge of a collapse.

"My God!" he muttered. "Rendall swore that he had destroyed my letter!"

"He instructed his wife to do so. She retained it for her own purposes. A few months ago her husband divorced her. This is her revenge. She has sold the copy of the speech and the letter to me. I know, also, the other facts in connection with the case."

Lord Kindersley took out his handkerchief and mopped his forehead. Already he began to see his way.

"I will buy those documents from you," he proposed.

"Your lordship," I replied, "I am not a blackmailer."

"You shall receive the money quite safely," he went on, eagerly. "I should not dream of communicating with the police. I shall look upon it as an equitable business transaction. Name your price. I am not a mean man."

"Neither, as I remarked before, am I a blackmailer," I persisted. "My use for these letters is predestined. They go to the Press."

Lord Kindersley sprang to his feet.

"What good will that do you?" he demanded, hoarsely.

"Not very much financially, perhaps," I acknowledged. "On the other hand, I know one newspaper, I think, which would pay me a large sum for them."

He brushed the idea on one side.

"Listen," he said, impressively. "No newspaper would deal with you as liberally as I am prepared to. Those documents must not be published. If it were generally known that I had bribed Rendall to hold up that speech, the Unions would declare war against me to-morrow. Not a man would stay in my employ. Besides, it would bring discredit upon my Party. It would ruin me politically as well as actually. Come now, Mr. Buckross, you look like a business man. Let's talk business. I'll write you a cheque for ten thousand pounds this morning."

"Your lordship," I replied, "if I dealt with you in the way you suggest, it would amount to a criminal offence. My conscience forbids it. I can deal with the Press fairly and openly. Your political ruin I cannot help. Your financial ruin I may help you to modify. I offer you four days' grace, during which time you had better get rid of as many of your shares in the Kindersley Shipping Company as you can."

"You promise to do nothing for four days?" Lord Kindersley exclaimed, eagerly.

"I promise."

He leaned back in his chair and mopped his forehead.

"Well, that's a respite, at any rate," he said. "Now, Mr. Buckross, you and I have got to understand one another on this deal."

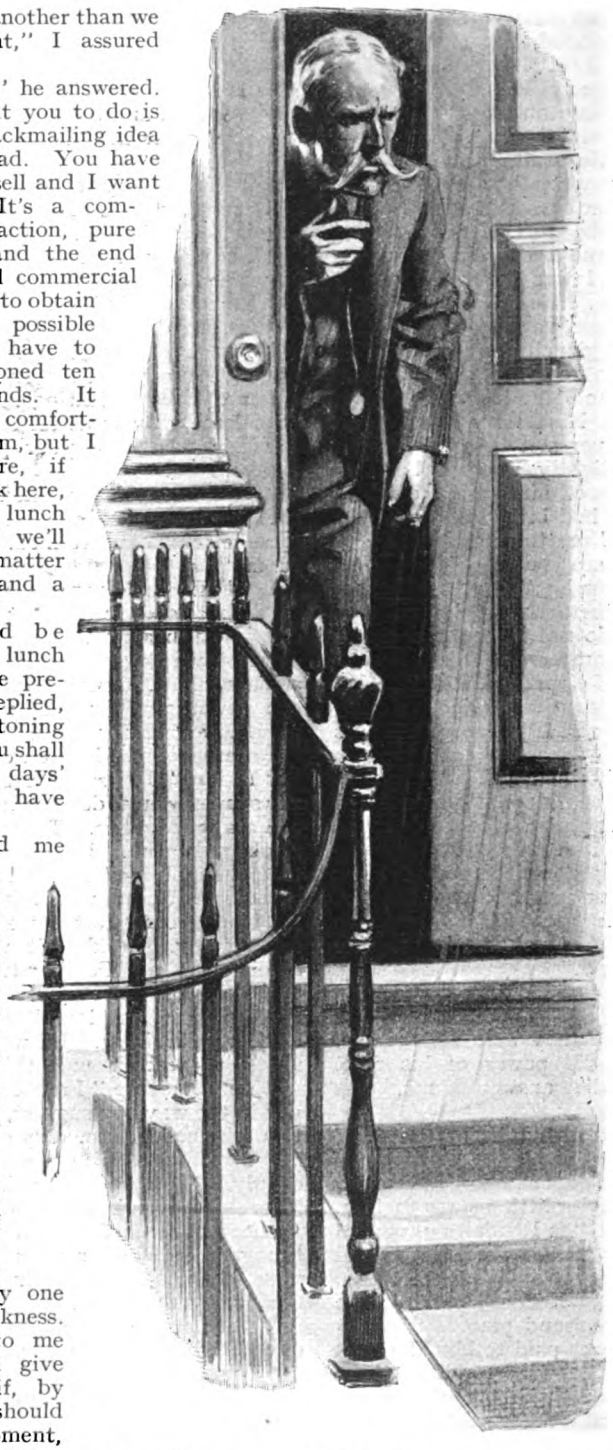
"We shall never get any nearer under-

standing one another than we are at present," I assured him.

"Rubbish!" he answered. "What I want you to do is to get that blackmailing idea out of your head. You have something to sell and I want to buy it. It's a commercial transaction, pure and simple, and the end and aim of all commercial transactions is to obtain the best price possible for what you have to sell. I mentioned ten thousand pounds. It seemed to me a comfortable little sum, but I can afford more, if necessary. Look here, stay and have lunch with me, and we'll discuss the matter over a cigar and a glass of wine."

"I should be taking your lunch under false pretences," I replied, rising and buttoning my coat. "You shall have the four days' grace which I have promised."

He followed me to the door, entreating me for my address. So convinced was he that I would change my mind that he sent his secretary out into the street after me. In the end I made my escape by promising to see him again on the evening of the third day. I made the promise in my one moment of weakness. It occurred to me that it would give me pleasure if, by any chance, I should see, for a moment, the girl whose courage was of so fine a quality that she neither feared a hideous death on the verge of a precipice nor disgrace in a London drawing-room.



He followed me to the door, entreating me for my address. So

out into the

I took my usual leisurely lunch and afterwards made my way to the uninspiring neighbourhood of Streatham. "The Towers," which I had discovered from a book of reference to be Mr. Edward Rendall's address, was a hopelessly vulgar edifice of grey stone, approached by what is generally described as a short carriage drive. An untidy-looking servant admitted me, after some delay, and escorted me across a linoleum-covered hall, odoriferous of a hot meal, to a small study at the back of the house, filled with shoddy furniture and hung with imitation prints. The popular M.P., as was his boast, was not in the least difficult of access. He came into the room within a few minutes, a pipe in his mouth, and giving evidence of all the easy good-nature which befitted his position.

"Don't know who you are, Mr. Buckross," he said, noticing with some surprise that I had not availed myself of the opportunity of shaking hands with him, "but sit

down, and welcome. What can I do for you?"

"I have brought you bad news, Mr. Rendall," I announced.

"The devil you have!" he answered, removing his pipe from his teeth and staring at me. "Who are you, any way? I don't seem to recognize your name."

"That really doesn't matter," I replied. "You can call me a journalist, if you like. It's as near the truth as anything about myself that I'm likely to tell you. Something very disagreeable is going to happen to you on the fourth day from now, and, as I am partly responsible for it, I have come out here to give you a word of warning."

"You're getting at me," he protested, uneasily.

"Not in the least," I assured him. "The facts to which I allude are these. I have in my possession a copy of the speech which you ought to have made at Liverpool last March and didn't, and also the original letter from Lord Kindersley offering you fifty thousand pounds to hold it up. I also know that you received that money on the following evening at the National Liberal Club, and I know what banks you entrusted it to."

Rendall was, I believe, at heart, just as much of a coward as Kindersley, but he showed it in a different fashion.

"You d——d, lying blackmailer!" he shouted. "How dare you come here with such a story! Get out of the house or I'll throw you down the steps."

"I have fulfilled my mission," I told him. "I shall be very glad indeed to go."

"Stop!" he shouted, as I turned towards the door. "How did you come by this cock-and-bull story?"

"How should I have come by it at all unless it were the truth?" I answered. "The whole world will know the facts soon enough. I obtained the papers from your wife."

"That's a lie, then," he declared, truculently, "for I saw her destroy the letter."

I smiled. The man, after all, was poor sport.

"She deceived you," I replied. "You saw her destroy a circular. She kept the

convinced was he that I would change my mind that he sent his secretary street after me.

letter. Perhaps she had her reasons. I bought it from her and another man at Frascati's Restaurant last night."

Conviction seized upon Mr. Edward Rendall, and, with conviction, fear.

"Look here," he proposed, "let's sit down and talk this over. I'll tell the girl to bring in cigars and a drop of whisky."

"I have not the least idea of accepting any hospitality from you," I assured him. "The documents are going to the Press in four days' time. I came here to give you that much notice."

His eyes narrowed a little.

"How do I know that the whole thing isn't a kid?" he said, suspiciously. "Have you got them with you?"

"I have," I told him.

He attempted nothing in the way of subtlety. He relied, I suppose, upon his six feet and his brawny shoulders. He came at me like a bull, head down and fists swinging. It was a very ridiculous encounter.

NEXT morning there were sensational paragraphs in most of the financial papers. Shipping shares all reacted slightly in sympathy, but the slump in Kindersley's was a thing no one could account for. They had fallen from six to five within twenty-four hours, and as soon as I reached my office in Holborn I received frantic messages from Mr. Younghusband, imploring me to close with a profit of over twenty thousand pounds. There was nothing whatever wrong with the shares, he assured me, and they were bound to rally. I listened to all he had to say, gave him positive instructions not to disturb my operations in any way, and, disregarding his piteous protests, rang off and made my way to the great newspaper offices, where my business of the morning lay.

It took me an hour to get as far as the assistant editor. He was a lean man, with horn-rimmed spectacles and an inevitable sequence of cigarettes. He told me frankly that I had as much chance of seeing the editor as the Pope. So I told him my story and showed him the documents. He went out of the room for a moment and returned with the editor. They looked at me curiously.

"Who are you, Mr. Buckross?" the editor asked.

"A speculator," I answered. "I bought those papers from Rendall's divorced wife. She has a spite against him."

"How can one be sure that they are genuine?"

"Anyone who studies them must know that they are," I replied. "If you want confirmation, I told Lord Kindersley yesterday of their existence and forthcoming publication, and advised him to sell as many of his shares as possible. Your financial column will tell you the rest of the story."

The two men whispered together for some time. Then the editor, who was a grey-haired, clean-shaven man, with a mouth like a rat-trap and a voice like a military martinet, drew up an easy-chair and seated himself by my side.

"What do you want us to do with these documents, Mr. Buckross?" he asked.

"I want you to give me a very large sum of money for them, and then publish them," I replied.

"You know that there will be the devil of a row?"

"That will be your look-out. Their genuineness will be your justification."

The editor looked thoughtfully out of the window. His face was as hard as granite, but he had very grey, human eyes.

"We should have no compunction about bringing the thunders down upon Rendall," he said, "but with Lord Kindersley it is a little different. He is a considerable and reputable figure in Society."

"He might survive the disclosures," I suggested. "After all, there was a certain amount of justification for his conduct. He averted a national disaster, even if the means he used were immoral."

"A case can be built up for him, certainly," the editor remarked, musingly. "What is your price for these documents?"

"Ten thousand pounds, and they must not be used before Thursday," I replied.

"Why not before Thursday?"

"I have given Lord Kindersley so much grace."

"You will leave the documents in our hands?" the editor proposed.

I considered the matter. I could think of nothing likely to alter my plans, but I was conscious of a curious aversion to taking the irrevocable step.

"You shall have them," I agreed, "if you will give me a letter acknowledging that they are my property, and promising to return them to me without publication, should I desire it, on Wednesday afternoon."

"What about the money?" the editor asked. "Do you want anything on account?"

"You are prepared to give me the ten thousand pounds?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"We never bargain," he said. "There is no standard value for such goods as you offer. The question is whether you want anything in advance?"

"No, thank you," I answered. "I'll have the whole amount on Wednesday afternoon, or the documents back again. I think that it will be the money."

"I trust so," my two editorial friends replied, in fervent unison.

ON Wednesday morning the Kindersley Shipping Company shares stood at three and three-quarters, and a brief notice in the *Times* announced that his lordship was confined to his house in South Audley Street, suffering from a severe nervous breakdown. Some idiotic impulse prompted me, after I had paid my brief visit to my office, to take a stroll in that direction. A doctor's carriage was waiting outside Kindersley House, and, as I passed on the other side of the way, the front door opened, and the doctor himself stood on the threshold. The thought of Lord Kindersley's sufferings had, up to the present, inspired in me no other feeling than one of mild amusement. By the side of the doctor, however, Beatrice Kindersley was standing. I knew then that the end of my career must be close at hand. I was weakening. My nerve had gone. The instincts of childhood were returning to me. The morbid curiosity which had brought me to the house had been gratified with a vengeance. I had received a psychological stroke. The girl's drawn and tear-stained face had disturbed the callousness which I had deemed impregnable. A new scheme was forcing its way into my mind. There was only one redeeming point about it all—I walked for the next few hours in peril of my life.

AT half-past two that afternoon Beatrice Kindersley hastened into the little morning-room on the ground floor of Kindersley House to receive an unexpected visitor. Her lips parted in amazement when she saw who it was. I held up my finger.

"Colonel Escombe," I reminded her.

"You!" she exclaimed.

I knew that there was not a flaw in my make-up or deportment. I was the Colonel Escombe who had attended Norman Greyes' wedding, and in connection with whose presence there there had been some slight question concerning a pearl necklace.

"What do you want?" she asked, breathlessly.

"To help you," I answered. "I saw you this morning, and you seemed in trouble."

She smiled at me gratefully, but a moment later her face was clouded with anxiety.

"It is dear of you," she said, "but you must go away at once. You are running a terrible risk. Sir Norman Greyes is in the house. He is with my uncle now."

"What is he doing here?" I demanded.

"My uncle sent for him to see if he could help. There is some serious trouble. I don't know what it is, but my uncle says that it means ruin."

At the thought of the near presence of my old enemy my whole being seemed to stiffen. Yet, alas! the weakness remained.

"Listen," I said. "What does your distress mean? Has your uncle always been good to you? Is it for his sake that you are unhappy?"

"Entirely," she answered, without hesitation. "I know that a great many people call him hard and unscrupulous. To me he has been the dearest person in the world. It makes my heart ache to see him suffer."

I glanced at my watch.

"Listen," I said. "Give me five minutes to get clear away. When I am gone, give him this message. Tell him that Buckross has changed his mind and that he will hear from him before five o'clock."

"What have you to do with all this?" she asked, wonderingly.

"Never mind," I answered. "Be sure to give me five minutes, and don't deliver my message before Norman Greyes"

She walked with me to the door, but when I would have opened it she checked me. Already her step was lighter. She took my hands in hers, and I felt her soft breath upon my face.

"I am going to thank you," she whispered.

It was an absurd interlude.

BOTH the editor and the assistant editor did everything, short of going down on their knees, to induce me to change my mind. They offered me practically a fortune. They hinted, even, that honours might be obtained for me. They tried to appeal to my patriotism, to every known quality, not one of which I possessed. In the end I obtained the documents, addressed them to Miss Beatrice Kindersley, bought a great bunch of fragrant yellow roses, hired a messenger to go with me in the taxi-cab, and saw them delivered at Kindersley House.

That night I spent in my room, taking stock of myself. On the credit side, my deal in Kindersleys had brought me a profit of something like thirty thousand pounds, likely to be considerably added to as I had bought again at four. Further, I had abstained from becoming a blackmailer and I had knocked Mr. Edward Rendall down. On the other hand, I might easily have made a hundred thousand pounds—and I had behaved like a fool.

Perhaps the most disquieting feature of it all was that I was satisfied with the deal.

Next month: "The Great Elusion."

The METROPOLITAN TOUCH

BY

P. G. WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY A. WALLIS MILLS

NOBODY is more alive than I am to the fact that young Bingo Little is in many respects a sound old egg: but I must say there are things about him that could be improved. The man's too expansive altogether. When it comes to letting the world in on the secrets of his heart, he has about as much shrinking reticence as a steam calliope. Well, for instance, here's the telegram I got from him one evening in November :—

I say Bertie old man I am in love at last. She is the most wonderful girl Bertie old man. This is the real thing at last Bertie. Come here at once and bring Jeeves. Oh I say you know that tobacco shop in Bond Street on the left side as you go up. Will you get me a hundred of their special cigarettes and send them to me here. I have run out. I know when you see her you will think she is the most wonderful girl. Mind you bring Jeeves. Don't forget the cigarettes. —BINGO.

It had been handed in at Twing Post Office. In other words, he had submitted that frightful rot to the goggling eye of a village post-mistress who was probably the mainspring of local gossip and would have the place ringing with the news before nightfall. He couldn't have given himself away more completely if he had hired the town-crier. When I was a kid, I used to read stories about knights and Vikings and that species of chappie who would get up without a blush in the middle of a crowded banquet and loose off a song about how perfectly priceless they thought their best girl. I've often felt that those days would have suited young Bingo down to the ground.

Jeeves had brought the thing in with the evening drink, and I slung it over to him.

"It's about due, of course," I said. "Young Bingo hasn't been in love for at least a couple of months. I wonder who it is this time?"

"Miss Mary Burgess, sir," said Jeeves, "the niece of the Reverend Mr. Heppenstall. She is staying at Twing Vicarage."

"Great Scott!" I knew that Jeeves knew practically everything in the world, but this sounded like second-sight. "How do you know that?"

"When we were visiting Twing Hall in the summer, sir, I formed a somewhat close friendship with Mr. Heppenstall's butler. He is good enough to keep me abreast of the local news from time to time. From this account, sir, the young lady appears to be a very estimable young lady. Of a somewhat serious nature, I understand. Mr. Little is very *épris*, sir. Brookfield, my correspondent, writes that last week he observed him in the moonlight at an advanced hour gazing up at his window."

"Whose window? Brookfield's?"

"Yes, sir. Presumably under the impression that it was the young lady's."

"But what the deuce is he doing at Twing at all?"

"Mr. Little was compelled to resume his old position as tutor to Lord Wickhammersley's son at Twing Hall, sir. Owing to having been unsuccessful in some speculations at Hurst Park at the end of October."

"Good Lord, Jeeves! Is there anything you don't know?"

"I could not say, sir."

I picked up the telegram.

"I suppose he wants us to go down and help him out a bit?"

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"That would appear to be his motive in dispatching the message, sir."

"Well, what shall we do? Go?"

"I would advocate it, sir. If I may say so, I think that Mr. Little should be encouraged in this particular matter."

"You think he's picked a winner this time?"

"I hear nothing but excellent reports of the young lady, sir. I think it is beyond question that she would be an admirable influence for Mr. Little, should the affair come to a happy conclusion. Such a union would also, I fancy, go far to restore Mr. Little to the good graces of his uncle, the young lady being well connected and possessing private means. In short, sir, I think that if there is anything that we can do we should do it."

"Well, with you behind him," I said, "I don't see how he can fail to click."

"You are very good, sir," said Jeeves. "The tribute is much appreciated."

BINGO met us at Twing station next day, and insisted on my sending Jeeves on in the car with the bags while he and I walked. He started in about the female the moment we had begun to hoof it.

"She is very wonderful, Bertie. She is not one of these flippant, shallow-minded modern girls. She is sweetly grave and beautifully earnest. She reminds me of—what is the name I want?"

"Marie Lloyd?"

"Saint Cecilia," said young Bingo, eyeing me with a good deal of loathing. "She reminds me of Saint Cecilia. She makes me yearn to be a better, nobler, deeper, broader man."

"What beats me," I said, following up a train of thought, "is what principle you pick them on. The girls you fall in love with, I mean. I mean to say, what's your system? As far as I can see, no two of them are alike. First it was Mabel the waitress, then Honoria Glossop, then that fearful blister Charlotte Corday Rowbotham——"

I own that Bingo had the decency to shudder. Thinking of Charlotte always made me shudder, too.

"You don't seriously mean, Bertie, that you are intending to compare the feeling I have for Mary Burgess, the holy devotion, the spiritual——"

"Oh, all right, let it go," I said. "I say, old lad, aren't we going rather a long way round?"

Considering that we were supposed to be heading for Twing Hall, it seemed to me that we were making a longish job of it. The Hall is about two miles from the station by the main road, and we had cut off down a lane, gone across country for a bit, climbed a stile or two, and were now working our way across a field that ended in another lane.

"She sometimes takes her little brother for a walk round this way," explained Bingo. "I thought we would meet her and bow, and you could see her, you know, and then we would walk on."

"Of course," I said, "that's enough excitement for anyone, and undoubtedly a corking reward for tramping three miles out of one's way over ploughed fields with tight boots, but don't we do anything else? Don't we tack on to the girl and buzz along with her?"

"Good Lord!" said Bingo, honestly amazed. "You don't suppose I've got nerve enough for that, do you? I just look at her from afar and all that sort of thing. Quick! Here she comes! No, I'm wrong!"

It was like that song of Harry Lauder's where he's waiting for the girl and says "This is her–r–r. No, it's a rabbut." Young Bingo made me stand there in the teeth of a nor'-east half-gale for ten minutes, keeping me on my toes with a series of false alarms, and I was just thinking of suggesting that we should lay off and give the rest of the proceedings a miss, when round the corner there came a fox-terrier, and Bingo quivered like an aspen. Then there hove in sight a small boy, and he shook like a jelly. Finally, like a star whose entrance has been worked up by the *personnel* of the *ensemble*, a girl appeared, and his emotion was painful to witness. His face got so red that, what with his white collar and the fact that the wind had turned his nose blue, he looked more like a French flag than anything else. He sagged from the waist upwards, as if he had been filleted.

He was just raising his fingers limply to his cap when he suddenly saw that the girl wasn't alone. A chappie in clerical costume was also among those present, and the sight of him didn't seem to do Bingo a bit of good. His face got redder and his nose bluer, and it wasn't till they had nearly passed that he managed to get hold of his cap.

The girl bowed, the curate said: "Ah Lfttle. Rough weather," the dog barked, and then they toddled on and the entertainment was over.

THE curate was a new factor in the situation to me. I reported his movements to Jeeves when I got to the Hall. Of course, Jeeves knew all about it already.

"That is the Reverend Mr. Wingham, Mr. Heppenstall's new curate, sir. I gather from Brookfield that he is Mr. Little's rival.

and that at the moment the young lady appears to favour him. Mr. Wingham has the advantage of being on the premises. He and the young lady play duets after dinner, which acts as a bond. Mr. Little on these occasions, I understand, prowls about in the road, chafing visibly."

"That seems to be all the poor fish is able to do, dash it. He can chafe all right, but there he stops. He's lost his pep. He's got no dash. Why, when we met her just now, he hadn't even the common manly courage to say 'Good evening'!"

"I gather that Mr. Little's affection is not unmingled with awe, sir."

'Well, how are we to help a man when he s such a rabbit as that? Have you anything to suggest? I shall be seeing him after dinner, and he's sure to ask first thing what you advise."

"In my opinion, sir, the most judicious course for Mr. Little to pursue would be to concentrate on the young gentleman."

"The small brother? How do you mean?"

"Make a friend of him, sir—take him for walks and so forth."

"It doesn't sound one of your red-hottest ideas. I must say I expected something fruitier than that."

"It would be a beginning, sir, and might lead to better things."

"Well, I'll tell him. I liked the look of her, Jeeves."

"A thoroughly estimable young lady, sir."

I slipped Bingo the tip from the stable that night, and was glad to observe that it seemed to cheer him up.

"Jeeves is always right," he said. "I ought to have thought of it myself. I'll start in to-morrow."

It was amazing how the chappie bucked up. Long before I left for town it had become a mere commonplace for him to speak to the girl. I mean, he didn't simply look stuffed when they met. The brother was forming a bond that was a dashed sight stronger than the curate's duets. She and Bingo used to take him for walks together. I asked Bingo what they talked about on these occasions, and he said Wilfred's future. The girl hoped that Wilfred would one day become a curate, but Bingo said no, there was something about curates he didn't quite like.

The day we left, Bingo came to see us off with Wilfred frisking about him like an old college chum. The last I saw of them, Bingo was standing him chocolates out of the slot-machine. A scene of peace and cheery good-will. Dashed promising, I thought

WHICH made it all the more of a jar, about a fortnight later, when his telegram arrived. As follows:—

Bertie old man I say Bertie could you possibly come down here at once. Everything gone wrong hang it all. Dash it Bertie you simply must come. I am in a state of absolute despair and heart-broken. Would you mind sending another hundred of those cigarettes. Bring Jeeves when you come Bertie. You simply must come Bertie. I rely on you. Don't forget to bring Jeeves.
—BINGO.

For a chap who's perpetually hard-up. I must say that young Bingo is the most wasteful telegraphist I ever struck. He's got no notion of condensing. The silly ass simply pours out his wounded soul at twopence a word, or whatever it is, without a thought.

"How about it, Jeeves?" I said. "I'm getting a bit fed. I can't go chucking all my engagements every second week in order to biff down to Twing and rally round young Bingo. Send him a wire telling him to end it all in the village pond."

"If you could spare me for the night, sir, I should be glad to run down and investigate."

"Oh, dash it! Well, I suppose there's nothing else to be done. After all, you're the fellow he wants. All right, carry on."

Jeeves got back late the next day.

"Well?" I said.

Jeeves appeared perturbed. He allowed his left eyebrow to flicker upwards in a concerned sort of manner.

"I have done what I could, sir," he said, "but I fear Mr. Little's chances do not appear bright. Since our last visit, sir, there has been a decidedly sinister and disquieting development."

"Oh, what's that?"

"You may remember Mr. Steggles, sir—the young gentleman who was studying for an examination with Mr. Heppenstall at the Vicarage?"

Of course I remembered Steggles. You'll place him if you throw your mind back. Recollect the rat-faced chappie of sporting tastes who made the book on the Sermon Handicap and then made another on the Choir Boys' Sports? That's the fellow. A blighter of infinite guile and up to every shady scheme on the list. Though, thanks to Jeeves, we had let him in pretty badly on the Girls' Egg-and-Spoon Race and collected a parcel off him in spite of his villainies.

"What's Steggles got to do with it?" I asked.

"I gather from Brookfield, sir, who chanced to overhear a conversation, that Mr. Steggles is interesting himself in the affair."

"Good Lord! What, making a book on it?"

"I understand that he is accepting wagers from those in his immediate circle, sir. Against Mr. Little, whose chances he does not seem to fancy."

"I don't like that, Jeeves."

"No, sir. It is sinister."

"From what I know of Steggles there will be dirty work."

"It has already occurred, sir."

"Already?"

"Yes, sir. It seems that, in pursuance of the policy which he had been good enough to allow me to suggest to him, Mr. Little escorted Master Burgess to the church bazaar, and there met Mr. Steggles, who was in the company of young Master Heppenstall, the Reverend Mr. Heppenstall's second son, who is home from Rugby just now, having recently recovered from an attack of mumps. The encounter took place in the refreshment-room, where Mr. Steggles was at that moment entertaining Master Heppenstall. To cut a long story short, sir, the two gentlemen became extremely interested in the hearty manner in which the lads were fortifying themselves; and Mr. Steggles offered to back his nominee in a weight-for-age eating contest against Master Burgess for a pound a side. Mr. Little admitted to me that he was conscious of a certain hesitation as to what the upshot might be, should Miss Burgess get to hear of the matter, but his sporting blood was too much for him and he agreed to the contest. This was duly carried out, both lads exhibiting the utmost willingness and enthusiasm, and eventually Master Burgess justified Mr. Little's confidence by winning, but only after a bitter struggle. Next day both contestants were in considerable pain; inquiries were made and confessions extorted, and Mr. Little—I learn from Brookfield, who happened to be

The brother was forming a bond. She and Bingo used to take him for walks together.

near the door of the drawing-room at the moment—had an extremely unpleasant interview with the young lady, which ended in her desiring him never to speak to her again."

There's no getting away from the fact that, if ever a man required watching, it's Steggles. Machiavelli could have taken his correspondence course.

"It was a put-up job, Jeeves!" I said. "I mean, Steggles worked the whole thing on purpose. It's his old nobbling game."

"There would seem to be no doubt about that, sir."

"Well, he seems to have dished poor old Bingo all right."

"That is the prevalent opinion, sir. Brookfield tells me that down in the village at the Cow and Horses seven to one is being freely offered Mr. Wingham and finding no takers."

"Good Lord! Are they betting about it down in the village, too?"

"Yes, sir. And in adjoining hamlets also. The affair has caused widespread interest. I am told that there is a certain sporting reaction in even so distant a spot as Lower Bingley."

"Well, I don't see what there is to do. If Bingo is such a chump——"

"One is fighting a losing battle, I fear, sir, but I did venture to indicate to Mr. Little a course of action which might prove of advantage. I recommended him to busy himself with good works."

"Good works?"

"About the village, sir. Reading to the bedridden—chatting with the sick—that sort of thing, sir. We can but trust that good results will ensue."

"Yes, I suppose so," I said, doubtfully. "But, by gosh, if I was a sick man I'd hate to have a looney like young Bingo coming and gibbering at my bedside."

"There *is* that aspect of the matter, sir," said Jeeves.

I DIDN'T hear a word from Bingo for a couple of weeks, and I took it after a while that he had found the going too hard and had chucked in the towel. And then, one night not long before Christmas, I came back to the flat pretty lateish, having been out dancing at the Embassy. I was fairly tired, having swung a practically non-stop shoe from shortly after dinner till two a.m., and bed seemed to be indicated. Judge of my chagrin and all that sort of thing, therefore, when, tottering to my room and switching on the light, I observed the foul features of young Bingo all over the pillow. The blighter had appeared from nowhere and was in my bed, sleeping like an infant with a sort of happy dreamy smile on his map.

A bit thick, I mean to say! We Woosters are all for the good old mediæval hosp. and all that, but when it comes to finding chappies collaring your bed, the thing becomes a trifle too mouldy. I hove a shoe, and Bingo sat up, gurgling.

"'s matter? 's matter?" said young Bingo.

"What the deuce are you doing in my bed?" I said.

"Oh, hallo, Bertie! So there you are!"

"Yes, here I am. What are you doing in my bed?"

"I came up to town for the night on business."

"Yes, but what are you doing in my bed?"

"Dash it all, Bertie," said young Bingo, querulously, "don't keep harping on your beastly bed. There's another made up in the spare room. I saw Jeeves make it with my own eyes. I believe he meant it for me, but I knew what a perfect host you were, so I just turned in here. I say, Bertie, old man," said Bingo, apparently fed up with the discussion about sleeping-quarters, "I see daylight."

"Well, it's getting on for three in the morning."

"I was speaking figuratively, you ass. I meant that hope has begun to dawn. About Mary Burgess, you know. Sit down and I'll tell you all about it.",

"I won't. I'm going to sleep."

"To begin with," said young Bingo, settling himself comfortably against the pillows and helping himself to a cigarette from my special private box, "I must once again pay a marked tribute to good old Jeeves. A modern Solomon. I was badly up against it when I came to him for advice, but he rolled up with a tip which has put me—I use the term advisedly and in a conservative spirit—on velvet. He may have told you that he recommended me to win back the lost ground by busying myself with good works? Bertie, old man," said young Bingo, earnestly, "for the last two weeks I've been comforting the sick to such an extent that, if I had a brother and you brought him to me on a sick-bed at this moment, by Jove, old man, I'd heave a brick at him. However, though it took it out of me like the deuce, the scheme worked splendidly. She softened visibly before I'd been at it a week. Started to bow again when we met in the street, and so forth. About a couple of days ago she distinctly smiled—in a sort of faint, saint-like kind of way, you know—when I ran into her outside the Vicarage. And yesterday—I say, you remember that curate chap,

Wingham? Fellow with a long nose and a sort of goofy expression?"

"Of course I remember him. Your rival."

"Rival?" Bingo raised his eyebrows. "Oh, well, I suppose you could have called him that at one time. Though it sounds a little far-fetched."

"Does it?" I said, stung by the sickening complacency of the chump's manner. "Well, let me tell you that the last I heard was that at the Cow and Horses in Twing village and all over the place as far as Lower Bingley they were offering seven to one on the curate and finding no takers."

Bingo started violently, and sprayed cigarette-ash all over my bed.

"Betting!" he gargled. "Betting! You don't mean that they're betting on this holy, sacred—— Oh, I say, dash it all! Haven't people any sense of decency and reverence? Is nothing safe from their beastly, sordid graspingness? I wonder," said young Bingo, thoughtfully, "if there's a chance of my getting any of that seven-to-one money? Seven to one! What a price! Who's offering it, do you know? Oh, well, I suppose it wouldn't do. No, I suppose it wouldn't be quite the thing."

"You seem dashed confident," I said. "I'd always thought that Wingham——"

"Oh, I'm not worried about him," said Bingo. "I was just going to tell you. Wingham's got the mumps, and won't be out and about for weeks. And, jolly as that is in itself, it's not all. You see, he was producing the Village School Christmas Entertainment, and now I've taken over the job. I went to old Heppenstall last night and clinched the contract. Well, you see what that means. It means that I shall be absolutely the centre of the village life and thought for three solid weeks, with a terrific triumph to wind up with. Everybody looking up to me and fawning on me, don't you see, and all that. It's bound to have a powerful effect on Mary's mind. It will show her that I am capable of serious effort; that there is a solid foundation of worth in me; that, mere butterfly as she may once have thought me, I am in reality——"

"Oh, all right, let it go!"

"It's a big thing, you know, this Christmas Entertainment. Old Heppenstall very much wrapped up in it. Nibs from all over the countryside rolling up. The Squire present, with family. A big chance for me, Bertie, my boy, and I mean to make the most of it. Of course, I'm handicapped a bit by not having been in on the thing from the start. Will you credit it that that uninspired doughnut of a curate wanted to give the public some rotten little fairy play out of a book for children published about fifty years ago, without one good laugh or the semblance of a gag in it? It's too late to alter the thing entirely, but at least I can jazz it up. I'm going to write them in something zippy to brighten the thing up a bit."

"You can't write."

"Well, when I say write, I mean pinch. That's why I've popped up to town. I've been to see that revue, 'Cuddle Up!' at the Palladium, to-night. Full of good stuff. Of course, it's rather hard to get anything in the nature of a big spectacular effect in the Twing Village Hall, with no scenery to speak of and a chorus of practically imbecile kids of ages ranging from nine to fourteen, but I think I see my way. Have you seen 'Cuddle Up'?"

"Yes. Twice."

"Well, there's some good stuff in the first act, and I can lift practically all the numbers. Then there's that show at the Palace. I can see the *matinée* of that to-morrow before I leave. There's sure to be some decent bits in that. Don't you worry about my not being able to write a hit. Leave it to me, laddie, leave it to me. And now, my dear old chap," said young Bingo, snuggling down cosily, "you mustn't keep me up talking all night. It's all right for you fellows who have nothing to do, but I'm a busy man. Good night, old thing. Close the door quietly after you and switch out the light. Breakfast about ten to-morrow, I suppose, what? Right-o. Good night."

FOR the next three weeks I didn't see Bingo. He became a sort of Voice Heard Off, developing a habit of ringing me up on long-distance and consulting me on various points arising at rehearsal, until the day when he got me out of bed at eight in the morning to ask whether I thought "Merry Christmas!" was a good title. I told him then that this nuisance must now cease, and after that he cheesed it, and practically passed out of my life till one afternoon when I got back to the flat to dress for dinner and found Jeeves inspecting a whacking big poster sort of thing which he had draped over the back of an arm-chair.

"Good Lord, Jeeves!" I said. I was feeling rather weak that day, and the thing shook me. "What on earth's that?"

"Mr. Little sent it to me, sir, and desired me to bring it to your notice."

"Well, you've certainly done it!"

I took another look at the object. There was no doubt about it, it caught the eye. It was about seven feet long, and most of

the lettering in about as bright red ink as I ever struck.

"What do you make of it, Jeeves?" I said.

"I confess I am a little doubtful, sir. I think Mr. Little would have done better to follow my advice and confine himself to good works about the village."

"You think the thing will be a frost?"

"I could not hazard a conjecture, sir. But my experience has been that what pleases the London public is not always so acceptable to the rural mind. The metropolitan touch sometimes proves a trifle too exotic for the provinces."

"I suppose I ought to go down and see the dashed thing?"

"I think Mr. Little would be wounded were you not present, sir."

THE Village Hall at Twing is a smallish building, smelling of apples. It was full when I turned up on the evening of the twenty-third, for I had purposely timed myself to arrive not long before the kick-off. I had had experience of one or two of these binges, and didn't want to run any risk of coming early and finding myself shoved into a seat in one of the front rows where I wouldn't be able to execute a quiet sneak into the open air half-way through the proceedings, if the occasion seemed to demand it. I secured a nice strategic position near the door at the back of the hall.

From where I stood I had a good view of the audience. As always on these occasions, the first few rows were occupied by the Nibs—consisting of the Squire, a fairly mauve old sportsman with white whiskers, his family, a platoon of local parsons, and perhaps a couple of dozen of prominent pew-holders. Then came a dense squash of what you might call the lower middle classes. And at the back, where I was, we came down with a jerk in the social scale, this end of the hall being given up almost entirely to a collection of frankly Tough Eggs, who had rolled up not so much for any love of the drama as because there was a free tea after the show. Take it for all in all, a representative gathering of Twing life and thought. The Nibs were whispering in a pleased manner to each other, the Lower Middles were sitting up very straight as if they'd been bleached, and the Tough Eggs whiled away the time by cracking nuts and exchanging low rustic wheezes. The girl, Mary Burgess, was at the piano, playing a waltz. Beside her stood the curate, Wingham, apparently recovered. The temperature, I should think, was about a hundred and twenty-seven.

Somebody jabbed me heartily in the lower ribs, and I perceived the man Steggles.

"Hallo!" he said. "I didn't know you were coming down."

I didn't like the chap, but we Woosters can wear the mask. I beamed a bit.

"Oh, yes," I said. "Bingo wanted me to roll up and see his show."

"I hear he's giving us something pretty ambitious," said the man Steggles. "Big effects and all that sort of thing."

"I believe so."

"Of course, it means a lot to him, doesn't it? He's told you about the girl, of course?"

"Yes. And I hear you're laying seven to one against him," I said, eyeing the blighter a trifle austerely.

He didn't even quiver.

"Just a little flutter to relieve the monotony of country life," he said. "But you've got the facts a bit wrong. It's down in the village that they're laying seven to one. I can do you better than that, if you feel in a speculative mood. How about a tenner at a hundred to eight?"

"Good Lord! Are you giving that?"

"Yes. Somehow," said Steggles, meditatively, "I have a sort of feeling, a kind of premonition, that something's going to go wrong to-night. You know what Little is. A bungler if ever there was one. Something tells me that this show of his is going to be a frost. And if it is, of course I should think it would prejudice the girl against him pretty badly. His standing always was rather shaky."

"Are you going to try and smash up the show?" I said, sternly.

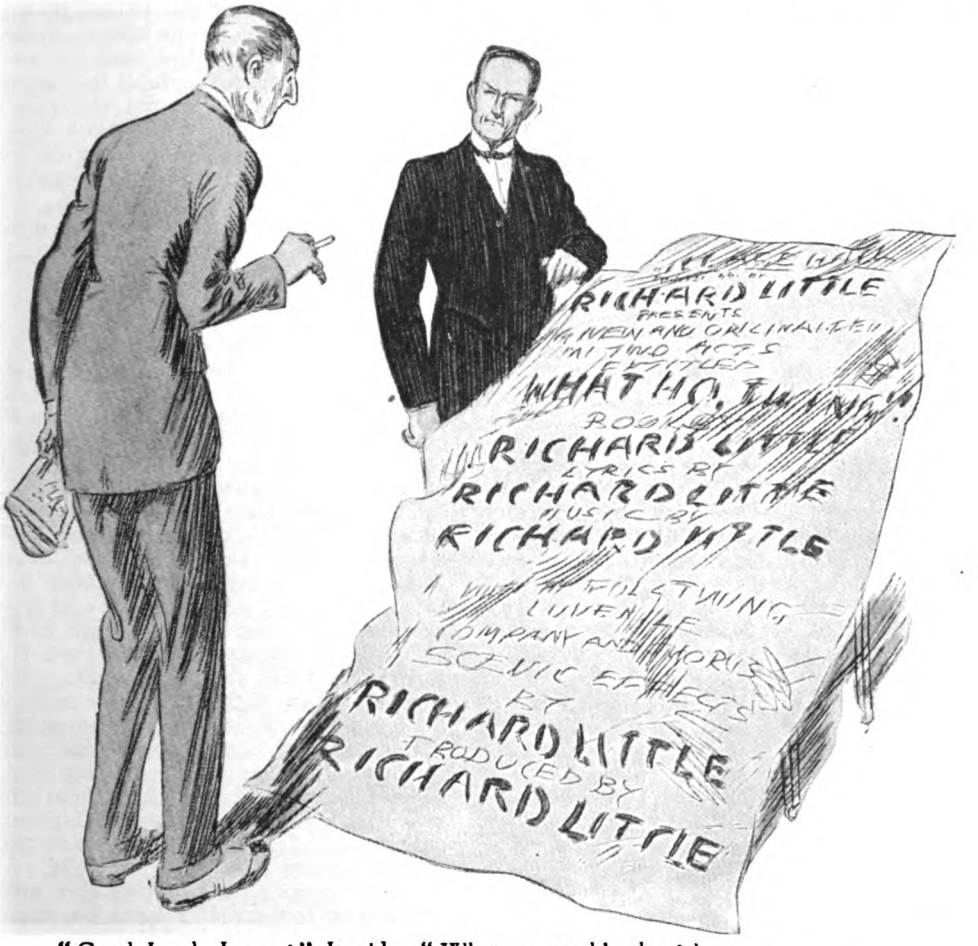
"Me!" said Steggles. "Why, what could I do? Half a minute, I want to go and speak to a man."

He buzzed off, leaving me distinctly disturbed. I could see from the fellow's eye that he was meditating some of his customary rough stuff, and I thought Bingo ought to be warned. But there wasn't time and I couldn't get at him. Almost immediately after Steggles had left me the curtain went up.

Except as a prompter, Bingo wasn't much in evidence in the early part of the performance. The thing at the outset was merely one of those weird dramas which you dig out of books published around Christmas time and entitled "Twelve Little Plays for the Tots," or something like that. The kids drooled on in the usual manner, the booming voice of Bingo ringing out from time to time behind the scenes when the fat-heads forgot their lines; and the audience was settling down into the sort of torpor usual on these occasions, when the first of Bingo's interpolated bits occurred. It was that number which What's-her-name sings in that revue at the Palace—you

would recognize the tune if I hummed it, but I never can get hold of the dashed thing. It always got three encores at the Palace, and it went well now, even with a squeaky-voiced child jumping on and off the key like a chamois of the Alps leaping from crag to crag. Even the Tough Eggs liked it. At the end of the second refrain the entire house was shouting for an encore, and the kid with the voice like a slate-pencil took a deep breath and started to let it go once more.

At this point all the lights went out.



"Good Lord, Jeeves!" I said. "What on earth's that?"
"Mr. Little sent it to me, sir, and desired me to bring it to your notice."

I DON'T know when I've had anything so sudden and devastating happen to me before. They didn't flicker. They just went out. The hall was in complete darkness.

Well, of course, that sort of broke the spell, as you might put it. People started to shout directions, and the Tough Eggs stamped their feet and settled down for a pleasant time. And, of course, young Bingo had to make an ass of himself. His voice suddenly shot at us out of the darkness.

"Ladies and gentlemen, something has gone wrong with the lights——"

The Tough Eggs were tickled by this bit of information straight from the stable. They took it up as a sort of battle-cry. Then, after about five minutes, the lights went up again, and the show was resumed.

It took ten minutes after that to get the audience back into its state of coma, but eventually they began to settle down, and everything was going nicely when a small boy with a face like a turbot edged out in front of the curtain, which had been lowered after a pretty painful scene about a wishing-

ring or a fairy's curse or something of that sort, and started to sing that song of George Thingummy's out of "Cuddle Up." You know the one I mean. "Always Listen to Mother, Girls!" it's called, and he gets the audience to join in and sing the refrain. Quite a ripeish ballad, and one which I myself have frequently sung in my bath with not a little vim; but by no means—as anyone but a perfect sapheaded prune like young Bingo would have known—by no means the sort of thing for a children's Christmas entertainment in the old village hall. Right from the start of the first refrain the bulk of the audience had begun to stiffen in their seats and fan themselves, and the Burgess girl at the piano was accompanying in a stunned, mechanical sort of way, while the curate at her side averted his gaze in a pained manner. The Tough Eggs, however, were all for it.

At the end of the second refrain the kid stopped and began to sidle towards the wings. Upon which the following brief duologue took place:—

YOUNG BINGO (*Voice heard off, ringing against the rafters*): "Go on!"

THE KID (*Coyly*): "I don't like to."

YOUNG BINGO (*Still louder*): "Go on, you little blighter, or I'll slay you!"

I suppose the kid thought it over swiftly and realized that Bingo, being in a position to get at him, had better be conciliated whatever the harvest might be; for he shuffled down to the front and, having shut his eyes and giggled hysterically, said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I will now call upon Squire Tressidder to oblige by singing the refrain!"

You know, with the most charitable feelings towards him, there are moments when you can't help thinking that young Bingo ought to be in some sort of a home. I suppose, poor fish, he had pictured this as the big punch of the evening. He had imagined, I take it, that the Squire would spring jovially to his feet, rip the song off his chest, and all would be gaiety and mirth. Well, what happened was simply that old Tressidder—and, mark you, I'm not blaming him—just sat where he was, swelling and turning a brighter purple every second. The lower middle classes remained in frozen silence, waiting for the roof to fall. The only section of the audience that really seemed to enjoy the idea was the Tough Eggs, who yelled with enthusiasm. It was jam for the Tough Eggs.

And then the lights went out again.

WHEN they went up, some minutes later, they disclosed the Squire marching stiffly out at the head of his family, fed up to the eyebrows; the Burgess girl at the piano with a pale, set look; and the curate gazing at her with something in his expression that seemed to suggest that, though all this was no doubt deplorable, he had spotted the silver lining.

The show went on once more. There were great chunks of Plays-for-the-Tots dialogue, and then the girl at the piano struck up the prelude to that Orange-Girl number that's the big hit of the Palace revue. I took it that this was to be Bingo's smashing act one finale. The entire company was on the stage, and a clutching hand had appeared round the edge of the curtain, ready to pull at the right moment. It looked like the finale all right. It wasn't long before I realized that it was something more. It was the finish.

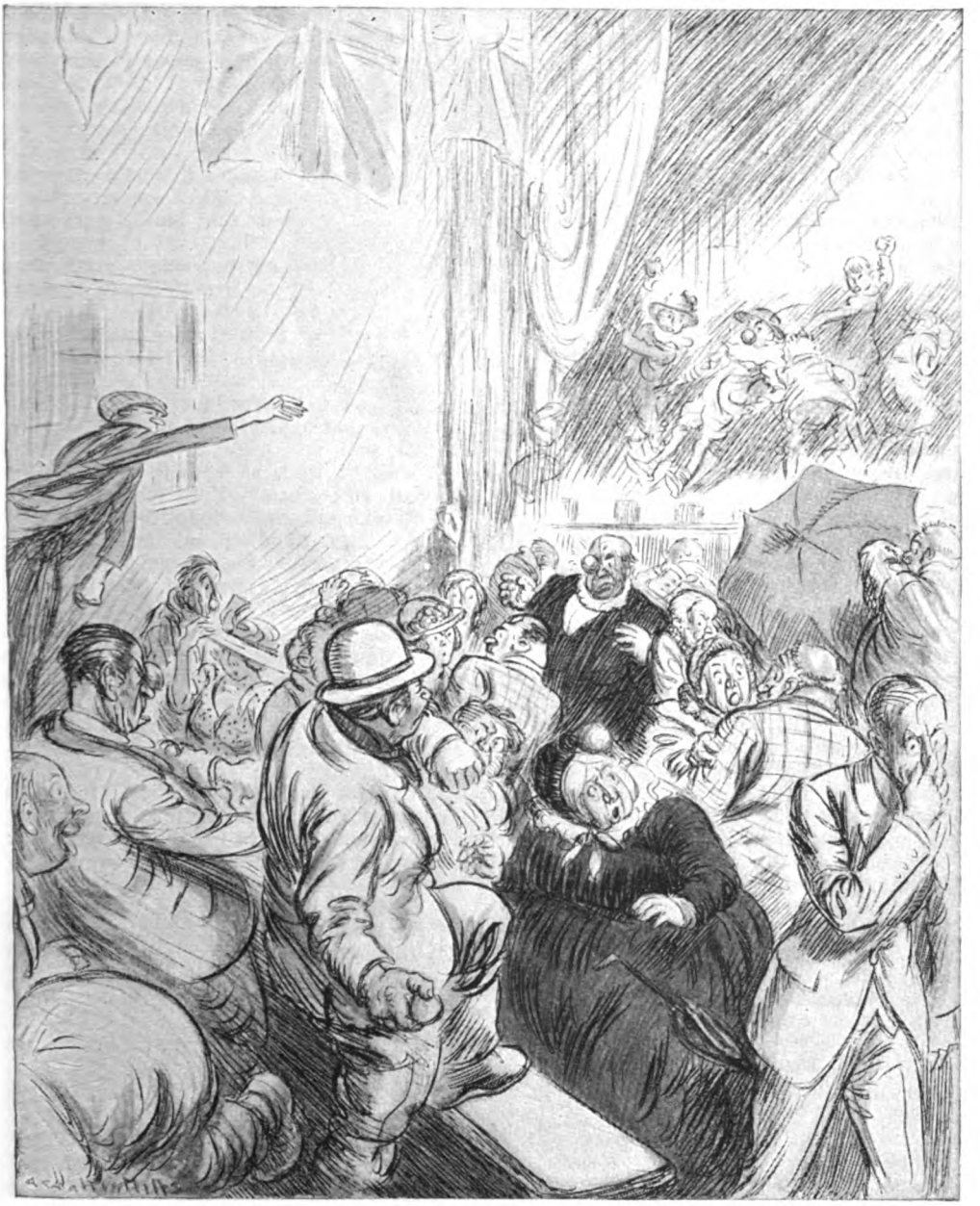
I take it you know that Orange number at the Palace? It goes—

Oh, won't you something something oranges,
My something oranges,
My something oranges;
Oh, won't you something something something I forget,
Something something something tumty tumty yet:
Oh——

or words to that effect. It's a dashed clever lyric, and the tune's good, too; but the thing that made the number was the business where the girls take oranges out of their baskets, you know, and toss them lightly to the audience. I don't know if you've ever noticed it, but it always seems to tickle an audience to bits when they get things thrown at them from the stage. Every time I've been to the Palace the customers have simply gone wild over this number.

But at the Palace, of course, the oranges are made of yellow wool and the girls don't so much chuck them as drop them limply into the first and second rows. I began to gather that the business was going to be treated rather differently to-night, when a dashed great chunk of pips and mildew sailed past my ear and burst on the wall behind me. Another landed with a squelch on the neck of one of the Nibs in the third row. And then a third took me right on the tip of the nose, and I kind of lost interest in the proceedings for awhile.

When I had scrubbed my face and got my eyes to stop watering for a moment, I saw that the evening's entertainment had begun to resemble one of Belfast's liveliest nights. The air was thick with shrieks and fruit. The kids on the stage, with Bingo buzzing distractedly to and fro in their midst, were having the time of their lives. I suppose they realized that this couldn't go on for ever, and were making the most



The Tough Eggs had begun to pick up all the oranges that hadn't burst and were shooting them back, so that the audience got it both coming and going.

of their chances. The Tough Eggs had begun to pick up all the oranges that hadn't burst and were shooting them back, so that the audience got it all round, there was a certain amount of confusion; and, just as things had begun really to hot up, out went the lights again.

It seemed to me about my time for leaving, so I slid for the door. I was hardly outside when the audience began to stream out. They surged about me in twos and threes, and I've never seen a public body so dashed unanimous on any point. To a man—and to a woman—they were cursing poor old Bingo; and there was a large and

rapidly growing school of thought which held that the best thing to do would be to waylay him as he emerged and splash him about in the village pond a bit.

There were such a dickens of a lot of these enthusiasts and they looked so jolly determined that it seemed to me that the only matey thing to do was to go behind and warn young Bingo to turn his coat-collar up and breeze off snakily by some side-exit. I went behind, and found him sitting on a box in the wings, perspiring pretty freely and looking more or less like the spot marked with a cross where the accident happened. His hair was standing up and his ears were hanging down, and one harsh word would undoubtedly have made him burst into tears.

"Bertie," he said hollowly, as he saw me, "it was that blighter Steggles! I caught one of the kids before he could get away and got it all out of him. Steggles substituted real oranges for the balls of wool which with infinite sweat and at a cost of nearly a quid I had specially prepared. Well, I will now proceed to tear him limb from limb. It'll be something to do."

I hated to spoil his day-dreams, but it had to be.

"Good heavens, man," I said, "you haven't time for frivolous amusements now. You've got to get out. And quick!"

"Bertie," said Bingo in a dull voice, "she was here just now. She said it was all my fault and that she would never speak to me again. She said she had always suspected me of being a heartless practical joker, and now she knew. She said—— Oh, well, she ticked me off properly."

"That's the least of your troubles," I said. It seemed impossible to rouse the poor zib to a sense of his position. "Do you realize that about two hundred of Twing's heftiest are waiting for you outside to chuck you into the pond?"

"No!"

"Absolutely!"

For a moment the poor chap seemed crushed. But only for a moment. There has always been something of the good old English bulldog breed about Bingo. A strange, sweet smile flickered for an instant over his face.

"It's all right," he said. "I can sneak out through the cellar and climb over the wall at the back. They can't intimidate *me!*"

IT couldn't have been more than a week later when Jeeves, after he had brought me my tea, gently steered me away from the sporting page of the *Morning Post* and directed my attention to an announcement in the engagements and marriages column.

It was a brief statement that a marriage had been arranged and would shortly take place between the Hon. and Rev. Hubert Wingham, third son of the Right Hon. the Earl of Sturridge, and Mary, only daughter of the late Matthew Burgess, of Weatherly Court, Hants.

"Of course," I said, after I had given it the east-to-west, "I expected this, Jeeves."

"Yes, sir."

"She would never forgive him what happened that night."

"No, sir."

"Well," I said, as I took a sip of the fragrant and steaming, "I don't suppose it will take old Bingo long to get over it. It's about the hundred and eleventh time this sort of thing has happened to him. You're the man I'm sorry for."

"Me, sir?"

"Well, dash it all, you can't have forgotten what a deuce of a lot of trouble you took to bring the thing off for Bingo. It's too bad that all your work should have been wasted."

"Not entirely wasted, sir."

"Eh?"

"It is true that my efforts to bring about the match between Mr. Little and the young lady were not successful, but still I look back upon the matter with a certain satisfaction."

"Because you did your best, you mean?"

"Not entirely, sir, though of course that thought also gives me pleasure. I was alluding more particularly to the fact that I found the affair financially remunerative."

"Financially remunerative? What do you mean?"

"When I learned that Mr. Steggles had interested himself in the contest, sir, I went shares with my friend Brookfield and bought the book which had been made on the issue by the landlord of the Cow and Horses. It has proved a highly profitable investment. Your breakfast will be ready almost immediately, sir. Kidneys on toast and mushrooms. I will bring it when you ring."

Next month: "The Delayed Exit of Claude and Eustace."

GAME and SETT

by

OLE LUK-OIE

(Author of "The Green Curve," etc.)

ILLUSTRATED BY W.R.S.STOTT

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Right or Left as strikes the Player goes;
And He that toss'd you down into the Field,
He knows about it all—HE knows—HE knows!

—The Rubáiyát.

I.

NO curfew tolled the knell of parting day; nor did any lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea. But the advance parties of flying foxes stringing out across the sky, slowly flapping their leathery wings as they "zoomed" over the mango trees of the *Bagh* on their nightly foray to the fruit gardens on the other side of the river, announced as clearly as any bell the approaching close of another long, long Indian day.

In front of the Gymkhana clubhouse sat a few ladies talking listlessly and discussing tea or ices. They were inactive. But all round were sights and sounds which showed that the British male cannot take his ease or enjoy relaxation after his daily toil without the assistance of a spherical body of some sort, whether it be hollow or solid, or of indiarubber, boxwood, ivory, bamboo-root, or of string sewn up in kid. From the hard tennis courts—there were no such things as grass courts—came the pat of the balls and the voices of the players scoring; from the croquet ground came the bang of wood against wood; from inside the clubhouse the click of the billiard and pool tables; from the nearer polo ground the thud of hoofs on hard soil, and from that farther off the same sound reduced to a mere drumming; while from the roofless rectangular mass of brickwork behind one end of the club echoed the shrill cries of a racquet marker calling the game, the smack of the ball, and an occasional loud report as the wood skirting received a hard drive.

The searing hot wind which had been blowing all day had now dropped, and there was not sufficient breeze to disperse the straight ascending cheroot smoke of the two men clad in flannels who were seated outside the racquet courts, waiting their turn for another game and idly watching the distant polo through the dust haze.

They sat for a few minutes silent, smoking and sweating, especially sweating. A hard single at racquets is no gentle exercise. When played within four walls whose dull black surface has been drinking in the heat of the tropical sun for hours, only to radiate and give it out when the sun itself goes down, the players can verily be said to lard the lean earth. At last one spoke: "Who's in No. 3 Court?"

"Rayce and Leslie Jerome."

"I can't make out why young Jerome is such pals with Rayce. He's a rotter."

"He's not so bad really, if he didn't lift his elbow quite so much and always play to win. But I must say he was the limit last Wednesday. Were you here?"

"No; I was at polo."

"But haven't you heard what an infernal ass he made of himself?"

"No."

"I should have thought it had gone the round of the station by now. We were playing a four—me, Rayce, Tomkins, I think it was, and the Colonel."

"What, Foxy Grandpa?"

"No, no, Tomkins's Colonel, old Tomato. I was playing with him. We had had a jolly tight game and had got to one sett all and were leading in the third and Rayce was in. Rayce had been rather ratty the whole game. He served a fault, and then old Ghafoor,

who was marking, called his second a fault. I thought he was right, but it was a very fast ball near the line and difficult to judge. I don't know if Rayce, who'd put up a run of six, was just riled at serving himself out or really thought it was a wrong call, but he turns round, curses Ghafoor for not keeping his eyes open, then walks up to the end wall, where there were dozens of used balls, and whangs one slap at him as hard as he can—and you know how he can hit. Luckily he misses by a few inches, and the surprised Ghafoor, who wasn't taking any chances, gently fades backwards on to the floor of the gallery. Rayce was too angry to see this, and without saying any more continues to let fly at the corner of the gallery like a bally machine-gun. It was funny. As soon as Ghafoor hears a ball hit the angle or whiz safely overhead into the gallery, he pops up his silly old face like a Jack-in-the-Box and begins to whine out: '*Ghareeb parwar—mera khasoor*'—and the usual song, when—' Ping,' up comes another hot one, and down goes his head. Of course, all the balls that didn't chase each other round the gallery seats or biff out into the middle of the polo ground came back round the angle like lightning. Rayce was too angry or too muzzy to notice them or to dodge, and when one catches him a fair dinger on the brisket he only gets madder than ever. At first, when we saw that Ghafoor was in no danger, we others thought it rather a joke. But when the ass went on, and there were about three balls in the air at once, all travelling about a hundred miles per hour, it got a bit thick."

"How priceless!"

"M'yes! Anyway, it was too much for our money. First we cursed the fool and told him to chuck it. Then we threw ourselves spread-eagled on our bellies, with our racquets over our heads."

"Old Tomato as well?" chuckled the other.

"Rather. He was the first to play spatchcock. It was 'Ping' from Rayce's racquet, 'B-r-r-r,' 'Smack,' 'Smack,' 'Smack,' on the walls, and then a treble-barrelled volley of oaths from three mouths just raised off the floor, before the next shot. Finally the Tomato, almost apoplectic, puts up his old purple phiz behind his racquet and roars out in his best brigade drill voice: 'Mr. Rayce, if you don't stop this infernal nonsense at once, sir, I'll put you under arrest.' By then Rayce, who'd got close to the end wall without noticing it, smashes his racquet slap in half and throws the bits at the place where Ghafoor no longer was. When the 'Cease Fire' sounds, up spring Jerome and me smartly to attention, and the Tomato scrambles to his knees, all black as sweeps from the muck on the floor. 'What the devil do you mean, sir?' starts off the old boy, and didn't he dress Rayce down to rights neither? That sportsman, if you please, tried to bluff it out; insisted on finishing the sett; said he was winning and wanted to bet on the result! The Tomato naturally not only refused to go on, but said he'd never play with Rayce again, and would report the whole matter to his C.O. And he was jolly well right, I say."

"Yes, but what had bitten Rayce? He's usually a pretty cool card, a bit too cool, I've always found."

"I don't know if it's the heat or the other thing, but he has been looking very bulgy about the collar lately. I think he's also had a bad month at cards. It's a pity, because if he would only take a pull at himself he'd be all right. He's a jolly good all-round man."

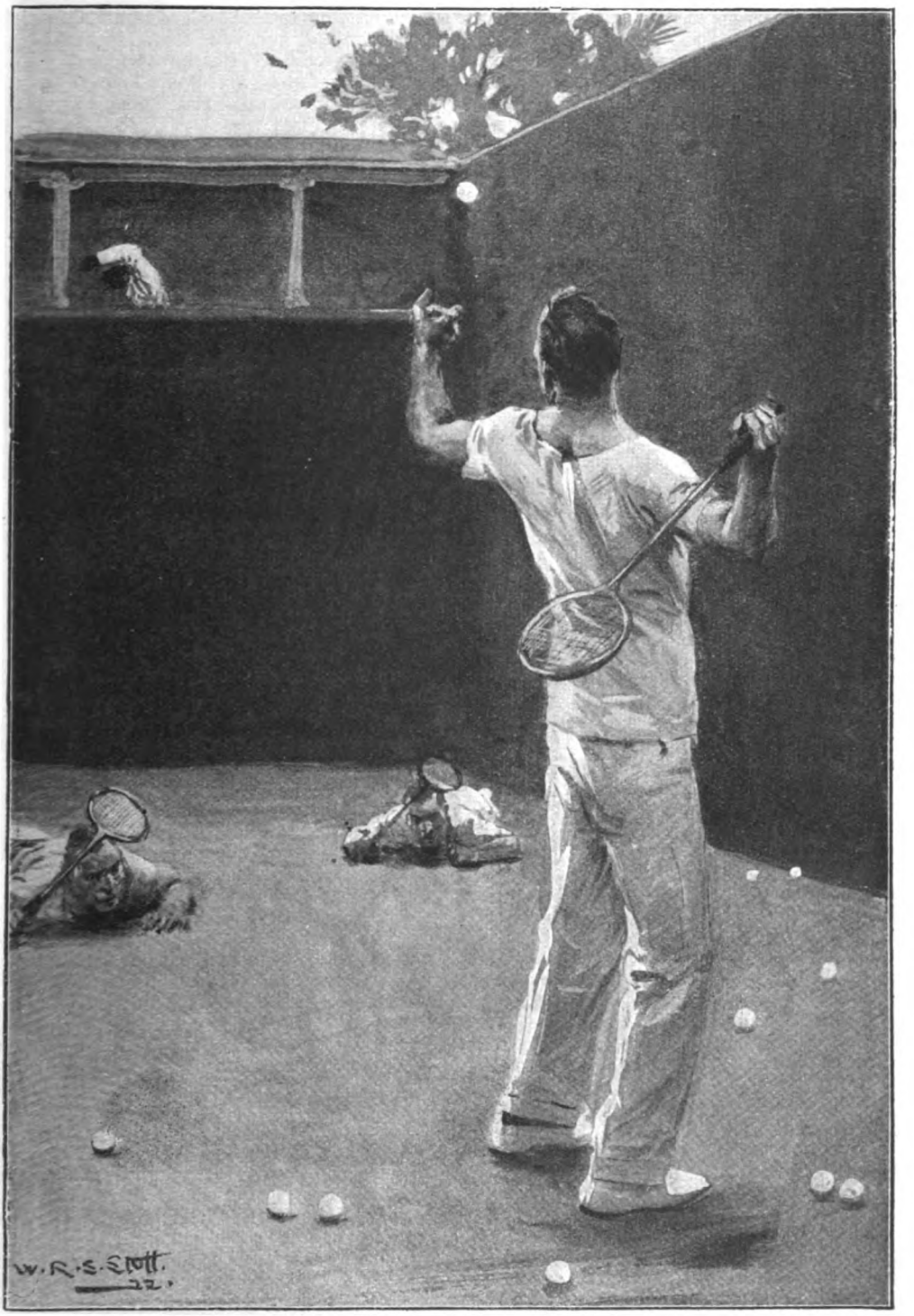
"Yes. God's given him a straight eye and a quick wrist. But a man ain't a sportsman simply because he's good at games; and I have no use for Rayce. I don't know anything about his birth; but he's one of Nature's cads, and his charm and *savoir faire* make him all the more dangerous—showy bounder. It's a pity that young Leslie Jerome's so thick with him."

"Oh, I dunno. I think you're a bit hard on him. I'm rather sorry for the poor devil. I kind of suspect he's up against it in more ways than one. Anyway, he's not entirely the scheming bad man of the play. He does give himself away sometimes."

"His uncontrollable brandy temper gives him away, as in the case you've just been telling me about, and then the hairy heel comes out. Fancy plugging old Ghafoor! There's Mummie's real little gentleman for you! He's got cad stamped all over him in plush letters a foot high. Thank God he's not in my regiment. It ain't for nothing they call him 'Honest Henry' in his own, my boy. Dam' 'im, anyway. It's gettin' dark pretty quick. Any use waiting for another game?"

"Yes. I thought I heard 'game ball' called in No. 3, so they may be near the end. Let's wait a bit. There's still light."

He was correct. In No. 3 Court the native squatting on the parapet at the corner of the gallery, bag of balls at his side, little scoring board in his hand, had just called "game ball." Leslie Jerome and Henry Rayce were playing a single; it was fourteen-ten in Jerome's favour, the games standing at one all. Jerome, a slight, pleasant-faced, freckled youth with light hair, was a good player. His opponent, some five or six years his senior, was a bulkier man and in a fleshy way good-looking, with dark crisp hair and blue eyes. He was powerfully



First we cursed the fool and told him to chuck it. Then we threw ourselves spread-eagled on our bellies, with our racquets over our heads.

built, especially about the neck and shoulders. At the moment the expression on his face, now purple with exertion, was distinctly unpleasant, for he was losing. He did not like being beaten at anything, and owing to his skill and generally cool temperament rarely was.

The youngster was "in." He served one of his best, hoping to finish the game. But he was a little over-anxious and hit too straight, and the ball came back down the middle of the court. Rayce saw his chance and took it. He volleyed the service low and hard in an absolutely untakeable return.

"Ten-FourTeen," sang out the marker.

Rayce had a glint in his eye as he went across to the right-hand serving box, holding up his hand for a new ball. He bounced it, found it too soft, and threw it away. After trying two more he was satisfied. He then served, and the rasping twang of the catgut told of the vicious cut put into the stroke.

"Perlay," cried the voice from the gallery.

The serve was a beauty which, hard as it was, hugged the walls and left Jerome guessing.

"Elleven-FourTeen," echoed from above.

With three more equally unplayable serves which almost split the ball the score mounted up; and the voice on high, vibrant as that of a muezzin from a minaret, rang out: "Perlay"—"Terweluv-FourTeen." "Perlay"—"ThatTeen-FourTeen." "Perlay"—"FourTeen Arl. Game Ball Arl. Sahib e'sett?"

"Anyone waiting?" asked Jerome.

"Assuredly; two sahibs are without."

"Sudden death, then."

From the left-hand serving box, "Honest Henry," perhaps to give his opponent a chance, perhaps to set a trap, knowing that he had him rattled, deliberately served a "donkey drop" down the middle. Jerome took the bait, ran forward, and tried to kill it, but hit too low; and the game ended with a deafening report on the wood.

"Damn!" said Leslie Jerome.

"Game and e'sett," called the impassive voice of Fate.

THE two dripping figures passed out of the four-walled oven, and sank into the chairs vacated by the waiting pair, who had got up on hearing the game called.

"Peg?" suddenly remarked Jerome. "Sun's about down."

"Thanks," said the other, who did not attach much importance to the altitude of the sun when it was a matter of drinks. "Gave you a sportin' chance with my last."

"Yes, I know," was the slightly disgusted reply. "I took the bait all right; but you'd got me rattled and, of course, I foozled. Thought I'd got you beat. You made a splendid recovery with that service of yours; couldn't get near it; don't know how you get so much cut on. It's enough to pull the skin off the ball."

"M'yes, it seems to bally well pull the guts out of my racquets. I wonder what my bill is going to be this month? Ghafoor is no earthly at re-stringing, and Ali is a perfect coolie. Once a racquet goes it's done. And they're fifteen dibs a time now. Yes, I knew you thought it was all over but the shouting," he chuckled—"but, as I've often told you, a game is never lost till it's won. 'Game and——' is the only thing that counts."

"Yes, I know," was the rueful reply. "When it's 'game ball,' or ninety-nine in a hundred up, against you, up goes your tail and you make a special effort. It's no good trying to rattle you, 'Onest 'Enry, you only produce some more trumps. But still, I don't agree about 'Game and——' being the only thing that matters. If the match is a good hard one I like it, whoever wins. But push down your drink and come and change. I want to poodle-fake for a bit. Don't you hear the band a-callin'?"

"Right-o. The mosquitoes have chewed the pattern of the seat of this chair on me by now." The tone was one of indifference. At heart the speaker was the reverse of indifferent. He had been itching to get away, but did not want to show it, and did not dare propose it for fear of giving away his motive. Jerome, however, was totally unsuspicious of Rayce's hidden desire or of the existence of the motive.

"By the way," continued Rayce, as both strolled towards the dressing-rooms, "about to-morrow; playing polo?"

"Yes, on the Gunners' ground."

"I'm playing here. What about having a swim afterwards at the Civil Club, and a bite of dinner together?"

"Good egg."

"Well, I'll pick you up here and drive you down and back. No; we'll go straight down as we are and dress after bathing. I'll collect you at your ground. Is that a deal? We'd better fix it now, as I don't suppose I shall see you again this evening."

The tone of the last sentence was again quite casual, but *if* the supposition of the speaker were correct there was something in what he said which might convey a hidden meaning to the listener, and possibly provoke a reply and the disclosure which the speaker sought. However, if it had really been Rayce's intention to draw his friend he was disappointed.

"Right," said Jerome; "meet me at the Gunners' ground. I'll send my kit down to

the club." He turned his head away slightly as he spoke. He felt for some reason annoyed. He also realized that he was blushing.

II.

THERE is a cause for everything.

There was the usual cause for Rayce's suggestion that he was probably seeing Jerome for the last time that evening; and, unknown to either, she was actually walking past the front of the club-house on her way to her father's barouche, with its pair of fat Walers, just as the two men entered the dressing-rooms at the back. Patty Graham was one of the not very numerous band of ladies out of all the cold-weather crowd of femininity which had not flown to the Hills with the general exodus at the end of April. She had insisted on staying down through the heat to look after her old father, the Civil Commissioner, whom, after many years' separation, she had come out to join the previous autumn. He was a widower, now nearing the time of retirement and pension.

Of the many swains at her feet it was not possible to point to any one specially favoured. Nor amongst half-a-dozen was it easy to name the man who was outwardly and visibly most devoted. But at heart no one was more her slave than Leslie Jerome, though he had not yet given open expression to his passion, having so far, owing to shyness and natural diffidence, refrained from speaking the word. He nevertheless intended to put his fate to the test shortly, for he realized that there were others who might have the same intention as himself, and that if he wished to win he would have to speak soon. About his infatuation there is nothing to be said. It was natural, open, and without ulterior motive.

But in spite of his realization of the existence of competitors, one thing he did not even dream was that his *blasé* friend, Rayce, had entered the lists against him. As a matter of fact it was only recently that the latter had fallen a victim, much to his own surprise. To the type to which he belonged, the art, or knack, of pleasing the opposite sex comes natural. And from his previous experiences Rayce had no reason to doubt his powers of fascination when he chose to exercise them. His tastes, however, lay really in the direction of more sophisticated fair ones of greater knowledge and riper charms than Patty Graham; and though her youthful freshness had at first appealed to him, it had been more in the way of admiration for a charming child than any stronger sentiment. Gradually, however, she had begun to exercise a certain intriguing attraction for him. He found himself unconsciously trying to ingratiate himself with her, to attract her favourable notice. Being what he was, he was even guilty of "showing off." But the friendly aloofness with which his half-veiled, easily assumed gallantry had been received at first surprised and then piqued him. He found himself thinking a great deal of this slip of a girl; and the more calmly unconscious of his attentions she was the more desirable did she seem, and the more did she occupy his thoughts.

His feelings and motives were perforce more subtle and complex than those of his friend and unconscious rival. Since he had realized what an attraction the damsel he had at first called "a nice little filly" had begun to exercise over him, he had set himself to "appreciate the situation" in all its bearings, even to contemplate the prospect of marriage. He was a thoroughly selfish man and there were many considerations. Possessing small means, he was cursed with expensive tastes, but had always managed to "do himself well," one of his favourite sayings being that for him the best, or "a little bit off the top," was good enough. His good looks, his address and skill at games had all helped him in an environment where externals count a good deal. Always extravagant and always a gambler, his last racing season had been disastrous, and for some time the moneylenders had been extremely troublesome. Being in a popular regiment, with the consequent slow promotion, his captaincy was still in the distant future.

Now, old man Graham was one of the "Heaven-born." He had served uncounted years in India, during which he had held a succession of fat, well-paid posts. He was a widower with one child, and having simple tastes and an economical nature must have put away a considerable amount of money; not much, perhaps, as money goes, but still a tidy little sum. When Rayce began to work things out on cold business lines, everything pointed to the fact that marriage with Patty was the solution of all his troubles. It was obvious. So soon, therefore, as he had come to this conclusion and found that the girl was by no means the easy conquest that he had at first anticipated, he had, again like a good soldier, altered his tactics and added to his frontal attacks on the lady herself a flank approach through the father. And not for a long time had the Civil Commissioner received so much deferential personal courtesy from a member of the garrison. But, gratifying as this attention was, Mr. Graham did not like Rayce in spite, or perhaps because, of his politeness, and he partly appreciated his motives. But he said nothing. Patty did not show any signs of

succumbing to the advances of this dasher; and there was no need to speak. So to Rayce the flank approach appeared to be progressing favourably.

BUT Life is full of snags, and there was another obstacle in the way of Rayce's success. Jerome, who was not of a secretive nature, had for months past unbosomed himself to his friend in regard to his feelings for Patty. Rayce had listened to his rhapsodies at first with good-natured amusement, then with hardly concealed boredom. But recently, because of his own feelings, he had forced himself to show warmer sympathy. He had guessed that Jerome intended very shortly to take his courage in both hands and settle his fate, and somehow his advice all tended in the direction of the necessity for caution, and of the inadvisability of "rushing fences," since a girl of Patty Graham's disposition could not be rushed. And his sage counsel had been accepted by the inexperienced youngster. But this pose made it all the more difficult for Rayce too openly to pay court himself to the girl.

Provided there was not already an understanding between her and Jerome, and he practically knew that matters had not gone so far, he felt sufficient confidence in himself to imagine that if he could get a chance to bring all his broadside into play he could, so to speak, cut out the prize from under his rival's guns. To come up with a rush at the end when all was nearly lost was, as he often boasted, a game he liked to play. To the ethics of deceiving his pal in such a matter he attached no importance. Was not all fair in love and war? If Jerome was such a fool as to allow himself to be cut out by someone more enterprising, it was his own funeral. Nevertheless, dilatory as Jerome was, he had apparently at last made up his mind to act. So had Rayce. This explained the latter's eagerness to get away after his game of racquets. He hoped to meet Patty Graham before Jerome or anyone else and to have an hour's walk and talk with her. An hour was a long time for a man who knew what he wanted and was not too shy to ask for it, or too modest to press his claims.

But Rayce's luck was out. In India much time is of necessity taken up in ablutions and the changing of garments, which duties form some of the few pleasures of life. And their punctual performance depends so much on the co-operation of others. As a matter of fact, on this special evening the two subalterns had decided to change rather earlier than usual. Jerome's servant had by chance turned up unnecessarily soon and was awaiting his master, who proceeded to tub and dress at once. Rayce's had not arrived, and Rayce had the pleasure of waiting whilst his rival got ahead of him. After fuming about for five minutes and cursing his absent bearer, who was not to blame, he made a false step. He decided to walk to his bungalow some quarter of a mile away, find out what had happened, and change there. He did so, to discover that he must have passed the man, who had already started for the club. This necessitated a hurried return journey on foot along the dusty road. It was in no sweet temper, therefore, that Rayce, in a clean flannel suit, with a tuberose in his button-hole, but still very hot, finally walked down the club steps about half an hour after his friend. He felt that he had lost his chance.

Threading his way between the chairs, he twice wended his way from the entrance gates to the bandstand and back, looking in vain for a well-known figure in a white dress. Nor did he see Jerome anywhere. He then joined the crowd at the peg table, where he washed down the dust of the road with a brandy and soda, and, refusing either to play a rubber or take a cue at pool, thought things out. It was obvious. No Jerome. No Miss Graham. They must have met half an hour before, and were probably driving round the cantonment in his crazy little bamboo cart. He had also, possibly, at last screwed up his courage to the sticking point.

Anyway, Jerome was certainly with the girl, and even if he saw the pair Rayce could hardly butt in and make a third. However, he was not beaten easily, and after a second drink determined to press his suit by the flank attack and to seek out and do the polite to old Graham, who would either be playing a rubber or sitting in his carriage. But the Civil Commissioner was also not to be found.

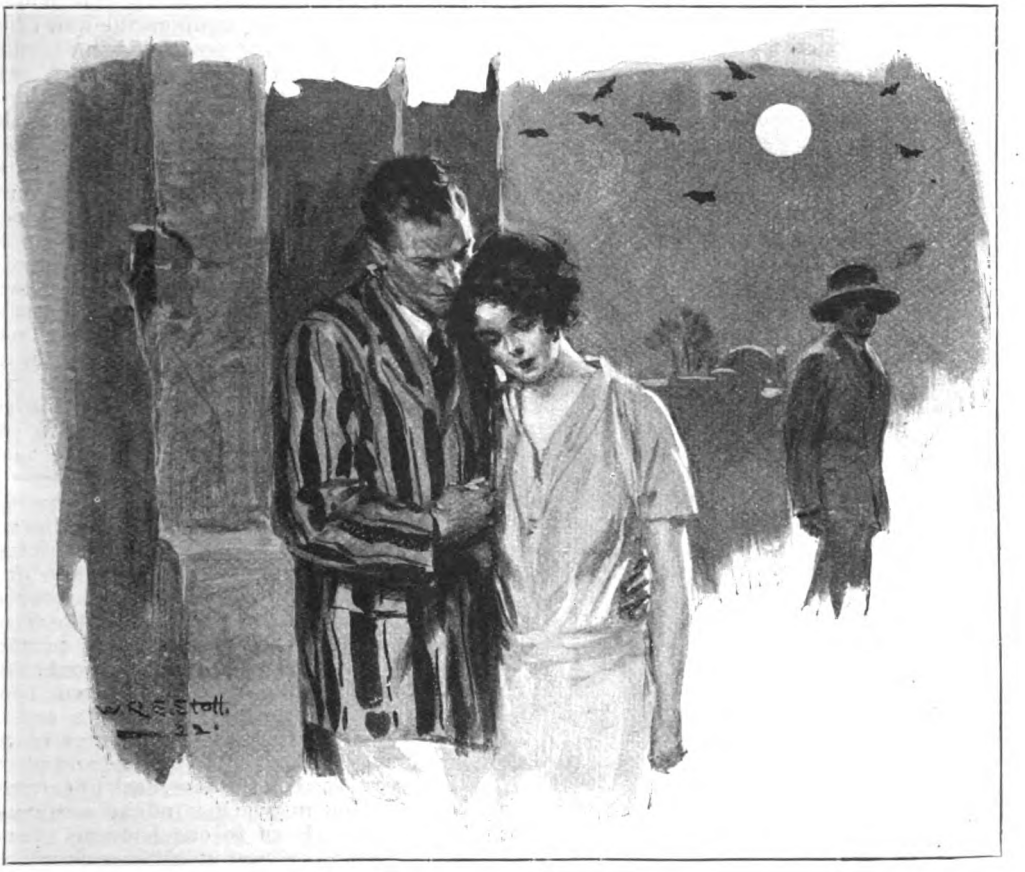
In the circumstances Rayce did not feel inclined for cards or billiards, still less for "coffee-housing" with his friends of either sex. He was dining out and had a longish drive, and he finally decided to stroll home and think things out. As he passed within fifty yards of the deserted racquet courts he thought he heard voices echoing from the walls, and looked up involuntarily. Then he stood still and stared. In the angle of the buttress of one of the high walls, with their backs to him, stood a man and a girl. Perhaps they imagined they were in the shadow of the buttress; perhaps they were so absorbed as to be oblivious, but as a matter of fact they were full in the slanting rays of the rising moon. The girl was in white. The man was wearing the Fusilier blazer, which was of so loud a pattern as to be unmistakable even at that distance in that light. And he had his arm round the

girl, whose head was on his shoulder. After a moment they walked on, his arm still round her waist, and vanished round the corner of the building. This circumstantial evidence of identification would not have been accepted in a court of law, for other officers of the garrison besides Jerome had the right to wear the Fusilier blazer, whilst a white frock was the usual apparel amongst the ladies of the station. But it was enough for Rayce in his then mood. Like many other people he saw what he was looking for, and in his mind there was no room for a suspicion of doubt. Whilst he had been wasting his time sweating in the dust to his bungalow and back, Jerome had done the trick. For, as there was no doubt in his mind as to who the pair were, there was for that very reason no doubt as to the nature of their relations. With two people holding the views that these two did it could mean one thing only.

Rayce stood still for some moments after they had disappeared from view. Then he said out loud, possibly to the moon, to the trees, or to the few stragglers of the flying foxes overhead, since Leslie Jerome was not in hearing, "'Game ball' perhaps, Leslie, my boy, but not 'game'—yet." With that he continued on his way, filled with evil intentions towards his bearer.

How was he to know that that day was the anniversary of the death of Patty's mother, and that, without waiting for the band, she had gone with the old Civil Commissioner for a moonlight drive to the cemetery some miles away? And without entering the billiard-room, how could he have guessed that Jerome, equally disgusted and disappointed at not seeing the lady whom he had hurried to meet, was even then missing every shot and steadily losing money at a game of pool?

And yet that night, at dinner at the General's, no one was more full of life and more entertaining than Honest Henry.



The man had his arm round the girl, whose head was on his shoulder.

III.

THE club in the Civil Lines was housed in an old palace. Not very old, for India, nor very large, for a palace, it was a rambling three-storeyed block, all length and little breadth, stretching along the river bank.

It was on the whole a sad and depressing place; and of its many apartments none was more gloomy than the swimming bath, into the perennial twilight of which no direct ray of the sun ever penetrated. At its brightest, even at noonday height, this place was dark and grey. The walls, the floor, and the sides and bottom of the bath itself were of drab cement; there were no white or gaudily-hued tiles to shimmer up through the ten feet depth of sombre green water; and but little light caught its ripples when disturbed. At the centre of one end was a spring-board covered with old coir matting, which was responsible for the musty smell of decay pervading the place. From this board it was the delight of any swimmer to try to "shoot," without swimming a stroke, the whole length of the bath. But, depressing as were its surroundings, the water was always cool.

It was getting towards dusk on the following day when Rayce's red-wheeled trap pulled up under the club porch. In spite of the arrangement made on the previous evening, Rayce was alone, for as he had mounted just before the last chukker of his game, a coolie had brought him a scrawled pencil note folded up into the usual silly strip about the size of a spill. This ran as follows:—

"Dear H.,—Sorry, shall be detained after the game for a bit. Don't wait for me. You go on to club. I'll drive myself or cadge a lift and follow later.—Yrs., L. J.

"P.S.—I have a bit of news to tell you."

Having read this with difficulty, owing to the fidgeting of his excited pony, Rayce had stuffed the paper hastily into his breeches pocket. He was not surprised that Jerome was going to be "detained." In the circumstances he was more surprised that he did not rat altogether from the club engagement. And he did not need to be told the "news." Had he not seen enough up in the *Bagh* the night before? He had gone on with the game; but his play, which had not been up to his form during the afternoon, became positively dangerous. Consequently, also, it was in an unpleasant humour that he stepped out of his trap at the Civil Club to await the arrival of his friend. His faithful bearer, who, with Jerome's, was seated in the veranda, having brought down his master's change of clothes and mess uniform, rose and salaamed, ready to assist him to change.

"*Abhi nahin*—Not yet," growled Rayce. "Wait till Jerome Sahib comes." Slowly and moodily he stalked through the dressing-room and wandered on down the passage to the swimming-bath. This passage led to one end of the bath directly behind the spring-board, which was in prolongation of it, and its position enabled anyone desirous of making a long dive to start his run at the far side of the dressing-room.

Except for one oil lamp on the wall of the passage the bath was practically in darkness. It was Rayce's preoccupation in other matters which alone prevented him from noticing this unusual lack of illumination. Sitting on the spring-board, he gazed downwards unseeing and absorbed in his own thoughts. After a few moments something attracted his attention. He suddenly rose to his feet and gave a low whistle. He then turned as if to go back into the dressing-room, hesitated, again looked into the bath, and finally walked back along the passage, more purposefully but even more slowly than he had come. As he did so, he observed affixed to the wall just under the lamp a notice which had escaped his eye when he had passed a minute or two previously. He read it, pondered, once again whistled softly, and appeared to come to a sudden decision. Alertly, but quietly, almost furtively, he tiptoed on into the still empty dressing-room, looked round, returned quickly to the notice and took it down. Whatever its import, he saw as he turned away that it had been written on the inside of the half cover of the ordinary purplish grey mottled or marbled exercise-book. He stood still, staring at this coloured back. Then, as if once more struck by a sudden inspiration, he took two brisk steps to the swimming-bath end of the passage and placed the piece of card on the floor, back uppermost, in a position in which it might quite well have fallen. Even to one knowing that it was there it was almost invisible, so closely did its hue match that of its background. As Rayce glanced at it he muttered: "'Game ball,' but not 'game'—yet," and his jaw set. After which he sauntered in a casual and natural manner back into the dressing-room. Though the room was still untenanted, he again looked round carefully as he threw himself into a long chair, in a state of perspiration which aroused to mordant activity all the prickly heat latent in his skin. Having apparently settled upon some course indicated by his recent rather mysterious actions, he was, in fact, for the moment preoccupied as to how he should prevent Jerome imparting the precise nature of the

good news at which he had hinted in his note. More than guessing what it was, he did not feel exactly in the mood for gush or to have to congratulate his friend and shake his hand. He was obviously ill at ease. "Bearer," he shouted, and continued when the servant appeared noiselessly through the French window. "Look down the road and see if the sahib is coming."

On hearing that there was as yet no sign of Jerome's arrival, he got up and made his way to the bar at the other end of the club, his footsteps on the polished floors re-echoing through the empty rooms. But, to their surprise, because he was in a way popular and rather sociable, he did not join the knot of men he found seated there. Ordering a double brandy, he gulped it neat and left the room.

"That's a curious drink for a hot-weather evening," remarked the Civil Surgeon, also the honorary secretary of the club and a privileged person. "I don't like it," and he shook his head.

"You're right, Platt," said another. "I'm thinking 'Honest Henry' Rayce will have to take a pull if he wants to get through this hot weather."

OBLIVIOUS of the comment he had excited, Rayce, feeling hotter than before, and with his eyes slightly bloodshot, returned to the dressing-room and again sat down to wait—and think. Before five minutes had passed his bearer announced the sahib's approach, and within another minute a trap drew up under the porch with a rattle similar to that of Rayce's, and Jerome bounced into the room, full of apologies, but so radiant and smiling as at once to confirm Rayce's suspicion, or rather conviction.

"So sorry to put you off. Couldn't possibly help it. Colonel sent for me." Jerome then looked at Rayce, who was still fully dressed in polo kit. "What? Not been in? I say, I do feel a cad. But we've just time for a wallow, haven't we?'

Rayce was wondering why Jerome, usually so honest, should have thought it necessary to lie so transparently, and a sour smile flickered across his face. He knew who the "Colonel" was. "Oh, yes. I thought I'd wait. There's no one down here to-night, and it's darned dull bathing alone in that sarcophagus." His voice was as calm as he could make it; but jealousy lay bitter on his soul.

"By Jove, I've got a thirst! Shall we have a drink now or later?" Whilst talking both had begun to empty their pockets preliminary to undressing.

"Better wait till after our swim," was the prudent reply. Then, as if inspired by a happy thought, Rayce added, with overdone boyish glee, "Last man in pays for the drinks. Bustle up."

"Right-o. *Jaldi*, bearer," said Jerome, eagerly accepting the challenge; or was it again swallowing the bait?

Whilst continuing to undress he turned to Rayce. "I say, Henry, about my bit of luck——"

But "Henry" did not want to listen. Apparently not hearing and absorbed in the disrobing race, he started loudly abusing his bearer for being so clumsy over his polo boots, which, in spite of his wretched man's herculean efforts to act as a human bootjack, were refusing to come off in a way that had never happened before. Beneath his breath the surprised and perplexed body-servant was objurgating: "When have I known the sahib's boots to behave like this? Such devil's work have I never seen."

But, strange to relate, no sooner was one of Jerome's boots off than by some miracle Rayce's right foot slid so easily out of its covering that the bearer, tugging at it, fell over backwards, which event formed the subject of more abuse and adjurations to haste. Similarly Rayce's left boot did not release its hold until Jerome's second was off. A moment later the latter, who had obviously forgotten what ever he wanted to say, stood up ready for the bath, naked, a splendid figure of a man in the prime of youth. Rayce was still in shirt and breeches.

"*Shabash!* excellent, O Buldeo, we win," said Jerome to his servant. "H.H. The drinks are on you, my boy! Who's for a cooler? Worry, worry." He was in great spirits. With a whoop he backed to the wall of the room, gave a hop or two to adjust his stride to the distance, and began running across the room, his bare feet pattering first on the matting and then on the hard floor of the passage.

As he started, Rayce, who was close behind him, suddenly thrust his bearer to one side and stood up. His face was congested and working in a manner unpleasant to see, and the veins in his neck stood out. He took a step forward and stretched out an arm. At that moment a yell of pain, followed by a rapid acceleration of footsteps as of a runner endeavouring to pull up in haste, sounded from the passage, and Jerome's angry voice rang out clear:—

"Damnation! Fetch a light. *Bati lao jaldi.* I've been bitten by a snake. The infernal thing is clinging to me. No, it's a bit of paper with a tin-tack in it. Who the blazes leaves nails about here?"

Rayce, who was swaying in a curious way,

threw up his head as if to shout, uttered a croak, put one hand to his throat, and crashed forward on his face.

Then Jerome limped into the room. In one hand he had the exercise-book cover, at the back of which he was staring, and with the other he was feeling the point of a drawing-pin firmly fixed in the cardboard, in the centre of a large spot of blood. He was so taken up that he did not at first observe Rayce lying face downwards on the floor, a thin trickle of blood streaming from his mouth. He dropped the paper, rushed forward, picked up his friend, and placed him in a chair. "My God, what's happened?" he said, as he held up Rayce's head, then shouted to his servant: "Buldeo, run quickly. Say that Rayce Sahib is very ill, and a Doctor Sahib must come at once. Also fetch some brandy *shrab*."

Before a minute had passed several men, headed by Dr. Platt, had collected in the dressing-room. But there had been time enough for Jerome whilst holding a sponge to his friend's head to wonder what it all meant. Surely the heat, which, great as it was, was normal, could not alone have been responsible so suddenly for this seizure? As he looked at Rayce's purple face he wondered if it were death.

Platt at once took charge. He felt Rayce's heart. "Gone!" he said. "Stroke, I expect. Often thought he'd go like this. Can't do anything. Poor chap!" He laid the head on the limp neck on the back of the chair, reverently closed the staring eyes, and placed a towel over the face.

All present, though accustomed to sudden death in many forms, stood silent, shocked. There was one exception. The dead man's bearer crouched in the corner of the room wailing "Ai, Ai, Ai."

"Poor Rayce," continued the doctor. "But what the deuce has been happening? You both look as if you'd been going to have a swim?" he queried, in a tone of great surprise, turning to the nude Jerome.

"We were."

"But can't you read, man?"

"Read?" faltered the youngster, who by this time was himself feeling very queer.

"Yes—read; read the notice that was up. Why, what's that?" he asked, sharply, pointing to the floor. "And what is it doing in here, with blood on it?"

Jerome turned and glanced in the direction pointed out. There he saw the piece of card he had dropped. It was lying face upwards now, and on it he read in bold hand-printed letters over an inch high:—

NOTICE.
DANGER!
BATH EMPTIED FOR CLEANING.

He could not speak, and his knees were trembling. He clutched the back of a chair.

Meanwhile the sharp eyes of the Civil Surgeon had observed lying on the floor, just below the dressing-table upon which Rayce had deposited the contents of his pockets, a crumpled piece of paper.

"And what's been in this?" he said, as he picked it up. From its folds it looked rather like one of those papers in which powders are wrapped. He smelt it, unfolded it, and shook it. He then saw some writing in pencil which he proceeded to read out aloud:—

"Dear H.,—Sorry, shall be detained after the game for a bit. Don't wait for me. You go on to club. I'll drive myself or cadge a lift and follow later.—Yrs., L. J.

"P.S.—I have a bit of news to tell you."

"That don't help much. Hold on, there's something more on the other side: 'Have come in for a pot of money from my uncle.' Anyway, this throws no light on this affair. I was afraid that this scrawl of paper might have contained poison. Looks like a note from you to him?" turning to Jerome again.

Jerome endeavoured to explain. He made one or two efforts to speak. But the shock of the imagined snake-bite; the second shock of his friend's sudden and mysterious death; and, lastly, the revelation of the fate he himself had only just escaped, were together too much for him. His knees gave way and he collapsed before the man standing nearest him could catch him.

As he was being brought round, incidentally with the aid of the brandy he had ordered for his dead friend, the doctor saw the blood oozing from the prick on his foot.

"Hallo!" he remarked, "this is a queer business. More trouble. I wonder if that's a snake-bite?" Demanding water, he began to sponge the wound in search of the fatal double puncture. As he did so he turned to the two bewildered servants, now both weeping:—

"Have you both been present with the sahibs?"

In chorus they snuffled: "Without doubt, Protector of the Poor."

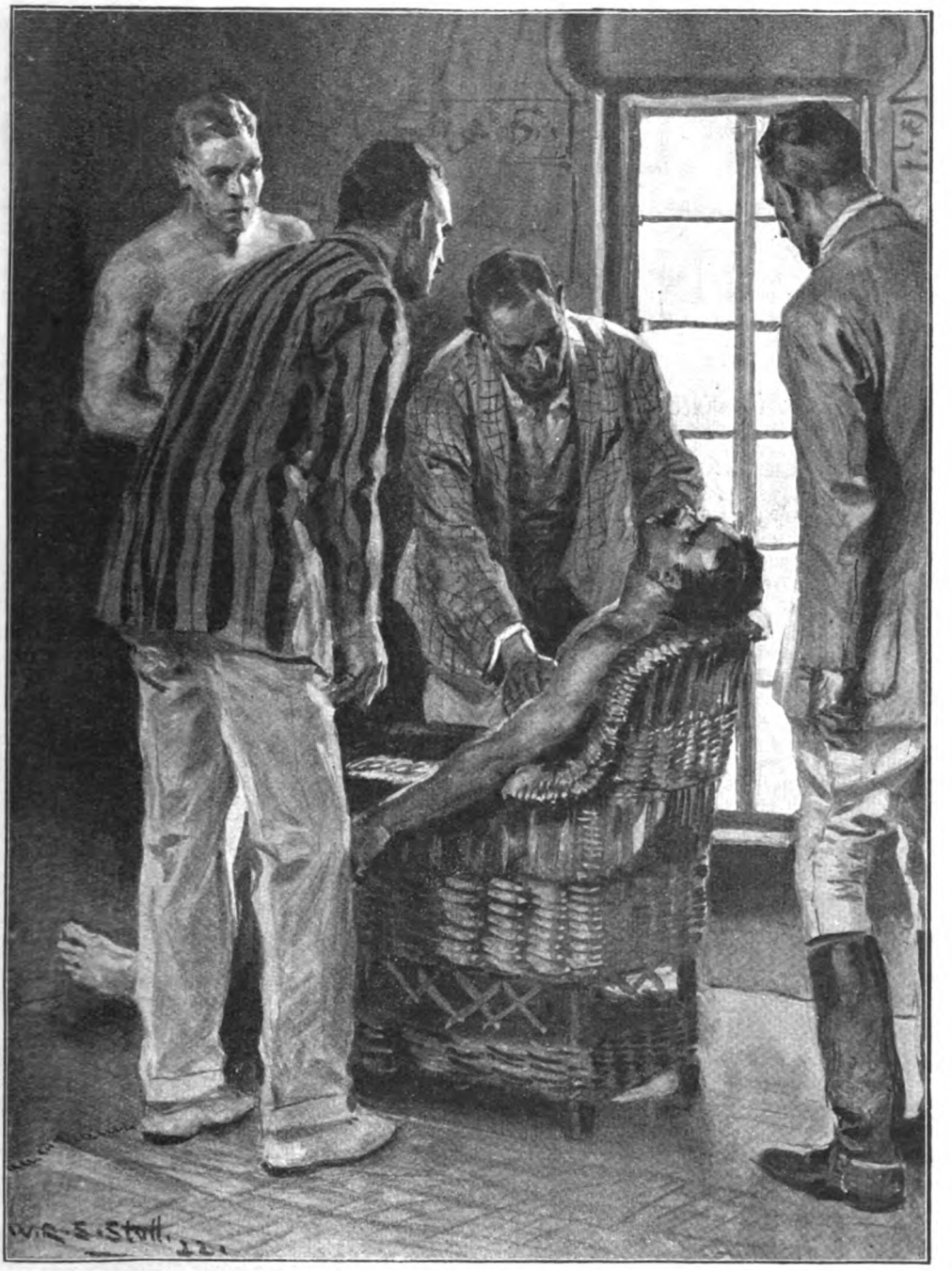
"Has there been any snake?"

"We have seen no snake, which is the truth."

"Then tell quickly what has happened."

Again did the reply come as if from one man:—

"God knows, sahib. God knows."



Platt at once took charge. He felt Rayce's heart. "Gone!" he said. "Stroke, I expect."

Five miles away the flying foxes were once again skimming over the mango trees. And it was but a few minutes since the voice of the muezzin perched up in the racquet court had called for the last time that day, "Game and e'sett."

SHERLOCK HOLMES IN REAL LIFE

By a Barrister and ex-Official of New Scotland Yard.

SHERLOCK HOLMES is, beyond doubt, as M. Poincaré has described him, "a very wonderful fellow"; but it is questionable whether he could give many points away to the detective of flesh and blood, who has little, if any, of his glamour and fame.

Where in fiction can you find crimes unravelled from more unpromising clues than serve their purpose so effectually in real life? The scratch of a nail on a country road; minute particles of bran found in the seam of a boot-sole; the dirt collected under a man's nails; the mark left by a gloved hand; the dust beaten from a coat; a ring of candle-grease; a partly-eaten apple: a fragment of a button—these and hundreds of clues equally microscopic have been sufficient to bring criminals to justice.

When, some years ago, M. Martin, Receiver of Taxes at Bilguy, was shot through the heart, part of the paper wadding with which the charge had been rammed down was found in the wound, and on it were a few scarcely legible words, used only in glass manufacture. This little bit of blackened and blood-stained paper was quite sufficient for the French police, who, with infinite labour and skill, tracked down the murderer—the son-in-law of the proprietor of a glass-factory who had supplied the glass of which the fragment of wadding was part of the invoice.

In another case a reveller in the garden of a Paris restaurant had a quarrel with a dragoon, who split his skull with a stroke of his sabre. The sabres of all the dragoons who had been out of barracks that day were collected and sent to the Sûreté for microscopic examination. None of them bore a trace of blood; but in the cutting edge of one an almost invisible particle of a blade of grass was observed in an almost invisible notch.

This was sufficient. The soldier to whom the sabre belonged was arrested and questioned, and finally admitted his guilt. He had cleaned the blade in the moist grass of the garden, and wiped it with a cloth; and the cloth had left in the notch that minute fragment of grass which sufficed to bring the guilty man to his punishment.

In a recent big jewel robbery in a Cannes hotel there appeared to be no smallest clue to the thief until the keen eyes of a detective observed, on the green-plush-covered seat of a chair in the room from which the jewels had been stolen, faint white marks which, after long examination and speculation, suggested to him the figures 39 reversed. How could they have come there? The solution came to his clever brain in a flash. The chair had been used by the thief to reach the top of the wardrobe on which the jewel-case had been placed; and the number had been chalked on the soles of his boots, as is the custom at most hotels where visitors leave out their boots at night to be cleaned. He thus had little doubt that the wanted man had occupied room No. 39 in the hotel. And so it proved; for, though the bird had flown, he was caught and the missing jewels were found on him.

But such cases of the solution of crime mysteries from the slenderest of clues could be multiplied almost indefinitely. And in following them up the detective of real life exhibits a skill and pertinacity no less wonderful than his prototype of fiction.

ONE day a gruesome discovery was made in the courtyard of a cheap restaurant and lodging-house in the Rue Princesse, Paris. In a deep well were found two parcels—one, a human leg wrapped in a cloth; the other, of black glazed calico, containing another leg encased in a long

stocking, on which was a mark consisting of a capital B with a cross on each side of it, thus—+ B +.

It was clear that a crime of a peculiarly horrible character had been committed; and its elucidation was entrusted to M. Gustave Macé, a young Commissary of Police, who threw himself heart and soul into the unravelling of this terrible mystery.

He quickly satisfied himself that the glazed calico cover, the peculiarly knotted ends, and the black cotton stitching were the handiwork of a man-tailor; and that the parcels must have been thrown down the well by someone who had occupied or visited the house to which the courtyard was attached. And he set to work to discover a man who satisfied both these conditions.

From the concierge he learnt that among the lodgers who had left the house was a pretty seamstress, Mlle. Dard. She was occasionally visited by a young man called Pierre, who brought white waistcoats for her to make up, and made himself useful by carrying water from the well for Mademoiselle's use. M. Macé's next step was to interview Mlle. Dard, whose address the concierge gave him; and from her he learned that the water-carrier was a Monsieur Voirbo, who "never worked much, yet seemed to have plenty of money, played cards, drank, and frequented *cafés*." He had one particular friend, whom he called Père Desiré, and whose aunt, a Mme. Bodasse, lived in the Rue des Nesles.

When M. Macé next interviewed Mme. Bodasse, she informed him that she had a nephew, Desiré Bodasse, whom she had not seen for two months. He had saved money, and was "eccentric and mean" And on accompanying M. Macé to the Mortuary she identified the stocking with the mysterious marks as his. There seemed now no doubt that the murdered man was Desiré; and with his aunt, M. Macé next paid a visit to his room in the Rue Dauphine, only to find, as he expected, that he was not there. On entering the room, the door of which he forced, the detective found that the bed had not been slept in; the dust lay thickly on the furniture; and Bodasse's strong-box had been broken open, and a pocket-book containing securities, which he was known to keep in it, abstracted.

M. Macé now proceeded to track Voirbo, the suspected murderer, who, he learnt, had left his rooms in the Rue Mazarin and was now living in the Rue Lamartine; but on his arrival at that address he found that his man had disappeared. He learned, however, from the concierge that Voirbo was a man of extravagant and dissipated habits who had been heard to say that he hated Bodasse for refusing him a loan of ten thousand francs.

A still more important discovery he made—that Voirbo had tendered in payment of his rent a five-hundred-franc share of Italian stock which had formed part of Bodasse's missing securities.

M. Macé now considered the evidence sufficient to justify Voirbo's arrest, and at last he found himself face to face with the man who, he had no doubt, was Bodasse's murderer. An examination of his pockets revealed a passage-ticket which showed that Voirbo was on the point of flight over the seas when arrested; and in his room were found a hank of cord similar to that with which the parcels containing the remains had been tied; a butcher's cleaver, such as might have been used in the dismemberment; and, concealed in a cask, a tin cylinder containing Bodasse's missing securities.

It now only remained to prove the dismemberment, and Voirbo's actual handiwork in it; and for this purpose the prisoner

The keen eyes of a detective observed faint white marks which suggested to him the figures 39 reversed How could they have come there?

was conducted to his old room in the Rue Mazarin—now occupied by a young married couple—where he was placed on a chair between two policemen. So far from showing any anxiety, he prepared to watch the proceedings with a smile of amused unconcern on his face.

On first entering the room, M. Macé had at once noticed a certain peculiarity. The tiled floor sloped downwards from the window to the bed in the recess. He had also realized, from the quantity and position of the furniture in Voirbo's time, that the only part of the room in which there was space to move freely was around the circular table. He concluded, therefore, that, if the murder had been committed there, it must have been near that table; and, further, that probably the dismemberment had been performed upon it.

Then, taking up a jug full of water, he said aloud :—

" I notice a slope on the floor. Now if a body was cut up on this table, the effusion of blood would have been very great, and the fluid must have followed this slope. Any other fluid thrown down here must follow the same direction. I will empty this jug upon the table, and we will see what happens."

At these words there was an immediate change in Voirbo's demeanour. Terror seized him, his face grew ashy pale, and his staring eyes were fixed upon the water-jug.

The water flowed from the table on to the floor, straight towards the bed, and collected beneath it in two great pools. The exact spot thus indicated was carefully sponged dry, and a mason was fetched to take up the tiles of the floor.

A quantity of dark stuff, presumably dried blood, was found below. The inference was obvious; the blood had flowed from the body and run through the interstices of the tiles, thus evading the washing of the floor, and proving the incompleteness of Voirbo's precautions. Later, the whole of the tiles and the saturated mortar were submitted to analytical test, and were beyond doubt proved to contain human blood.

This terrible discovery, effected in his own presence, so affected Voirbo that there and then he made full confession of the crime.

THAT the provincial detective of England need not fear comparison with his brother of New Scotland Yard has been proved again and again, as in the following case.

A few years ago a man, arrested at Liverpool on a charge of giving a false name and address to a pawnbroker when attempting to pledge a " diamond-set " locket and a gold chain, was suspected of being a systematic swindler, who was reaping a rich harvest by passing off jargoons (stones which have the brilliance of diamonds) as diamonds of many times their value; and the task of following the case up was given to a local detective who had won some reputation for skill.

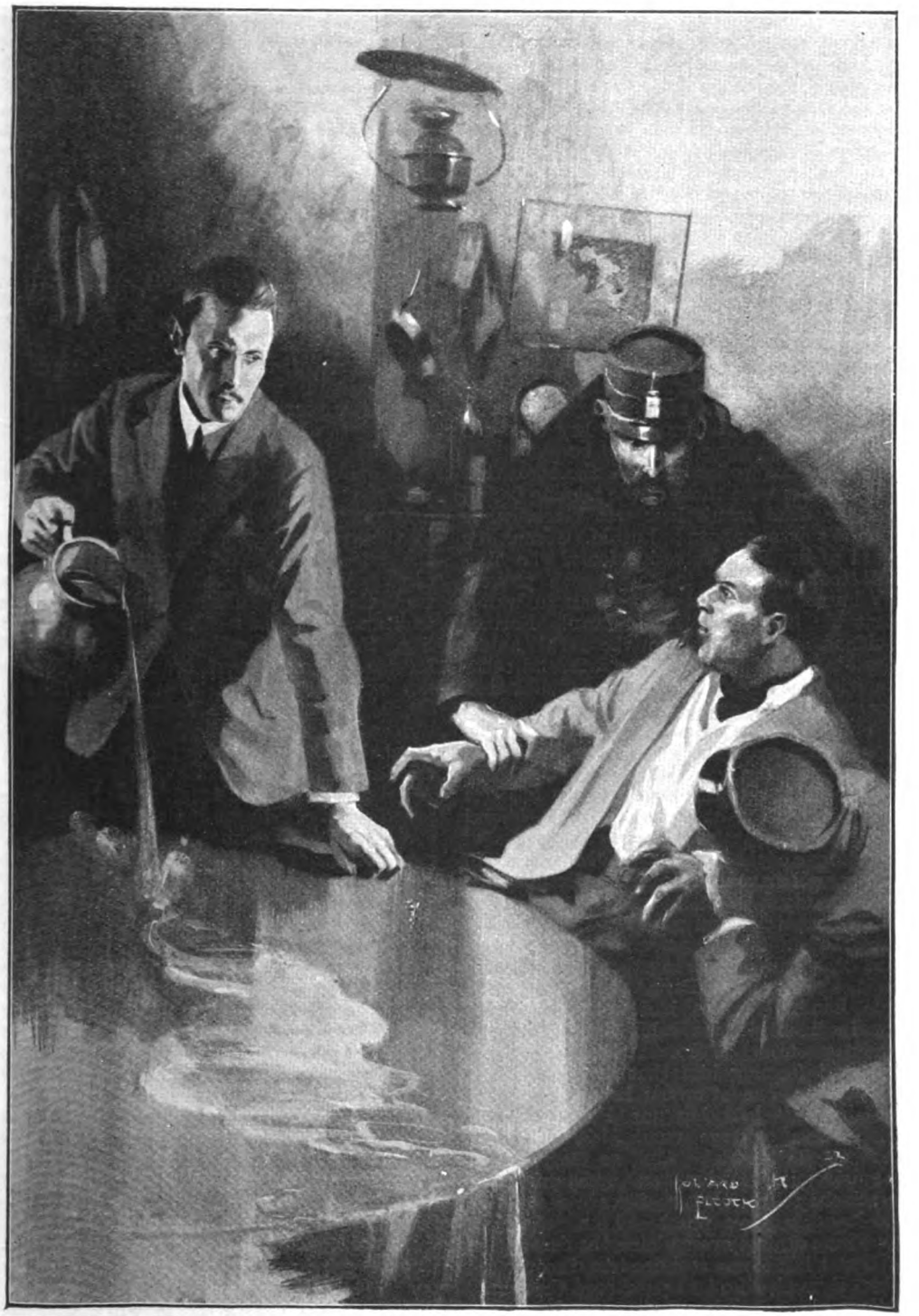
His first step was to interview every pawnbroker in the city, and from at least a dozen of them he learnt that a strange man had recently pawned with them a jewelled locket and an eighteen-carat chain, in each case under a different name and address; but in no case had he described the stone as a diamond. At last, however, he discovered a pawnbroker who had advanced twelve pounds on a similar pledge, and who held a contract-form signed by the pledger in which the articles were described as " a single-stone diamond locket and eighteen-carat gold guard." Here was the evidence the detective was seeking; and on the strength of it the prisoner, after being identified by the pawnbroker, was formally charged with fraud and remanded for further inquiries.

The detective's next step was to visit the prisoner's lodgings; and there he found a bunch of keys, all of which, with one exception, fitted one or other of the bags or trunks in the room. If he could only discover the lock for this mysterious key he felt sure he would make a valuable discovery. It seemed clear that somewhere in Liverpool the prisoner had a hidden store of the fraudulent lockets of which he had already disposed of so many, and this store he now set himself to find.

He visited every left-luggage office at every railway-station in Liverpool and Birkenhead; but nowhere could he find a bag or box left by anyone answering the prisoner's description. He was almost reduced to despair when one day, on his way from Birkenhead, his eyes chanced to fall on the Safe Deposit building in Exchange Street East, and at the sight of it the idea flashed into his mind that this might be the very place he sought.

After procuring a search-warrant he entered the building, and, producing the key, asked the manager: " Does this belong to any of your boxes? " The manager, in view of the warrant, gave him every assistance; and before an hour had passed the required box was found and opened by means of the key, when it revealed a large number of lockets set with jargoons —the facsimiles of those palmed off on a dozen or more of Liverpool pawnbrokers —several second-hand gold chains, and a number of jewellers' tools.

Thus after months of patient and at times almost heart-breaking labour, with marvellous skill and pertinacity, the scoundrel's



"I will empty this jug upon the table, and we will see what happens." At these words there was an immediate change in Voirbo's demeanour.

guilt was conclusively brought home to him. He had clearly come to Liverpool with a large stock of fraudulent "diamond" lockets, which he systematically set to work to pawn for much more than their value at the rate of five or six a day. It was proved, moreover, that each visit to a pawnbroker was preceded by one to the Safe Deposit building, from which he had taken another locket and chain.

ON July 20th, 1889, the Paris police were informed of the disappearance of M. Gouffé, a well-to-do bailiff, who lived in the Rue Rougemont; and a fortnight later his body was discovered, in an advanced state of decomposition, by a road-mender, in a thicket by the road-side about ten miles from Lyons. Two days later, near the same spot, were found the fragments of a trunk, the key to which had been picked up near the body.

The Lyons police scouted the idea that the remains were those of the missing bailiff, for the dead man's hair was black, while Gouffé's was auburn; but M. Goron, the head of the Paris detective force, who himself took the case in hand, soon proved, by immersing a lock of the hair in water, that the hair was really auburn. Further evidences—an injury to the right ankle, the absence of a particular tooth, and other peculiarities—established beyond doubt that the remains were those of Gouffé.

Four months elapsed from the bailiff's disappearance without yielding the least clue to his murderer, when M. Goron accidentally learned that another man and his mistress had disappeared at the same time—Michel Eyraud and Gabrielle Bompard, persons of questionable character, who, he suspected, might well have had some connection with the tragedy.

This suspicion was confirmed a few weeks later, after the fragments of the trunk had been skilfully put together and exhibited in the Morgue at Paris, and a reward of five hundred francs had been advertised for its identification. M. Goron received a letter from a London boarding-house keeper informing him that in July two of his lodgers, one of whom he only knew as "Gabrielle," had left for France, taking with them a large trunk, identical with that at the Morgue. And, as the result of inquiries in London, an assistant at a trunk-shop in Gower Street recognized the trunk as one purchased on July 12th by a man strongly resembling the description of Eyraud. It now remained to discover the man, Eyraud, who had purchased the trunk.

Several weeks, however, passed in vain search for the fugitives, when one day, to M. Goron's amazement, Gabrielle Bompard walked into the Préfecture and, calmly seating herself on the Prefect's desk, unfolded the following story. Towards the end of the previous July she had been living in the Rue Tronson-Ducoudray with M. Eyraud. At his instigation she had lured Gouffé to their rooms with intent to rob him. While she was sitting on his knee she had playfully slipped a noose round his neck; Eyraud, who was concealed behind a curtain, had pulled the cord, which ran over a pulley in the ceiling and was attached to the noose, and had strangled the bailiff. They had put the body in the trunk, bought for the purpose in London, and the following day had hidden it in the thicket where it was found. Then they had gone to America, where he had deserted her. Her part in the murder, she declared, was taken only under the irresistible compulsion of "that serpent Eyraud," who had alone planned and executed the crime.

In spite of her plausible story Gabrielle was promptly lodged in jail, and it now only remained to find the principal partner in the crime; and a merry dance he led the detectives before he was at last run to earth. Week after week they followed his trail through Canada and the States—a trail marked by acts of thieving and swindling. From New York to San Francisco and Mexico they followed him; and it was not until May 20th, 1890, that he was caught at Havana, on information supplied by one of his old *employés*, who had recognized in the ragged, unkempt wanderer the once prosperous distiller of Sèvres. After a highly-sensational trial both were found guilty; Eyraud was sentenced to death, and his accomplice to twenty years' penal servitude.

LATE one December night a police-constable named Cole was found lying dead in Ashwin Street, Dalston, presumably shot by a burglar who had attempted to enter a Baptist chapel in that street. Of his murderer the only traces discovered were a black wide-awake hat, a couple of chisels, and a bullet extracted from the dead man's brain. The only evidence of identity was that of two policemen who, half an hour or so before the tragedy, had seen a man in a similar hat in the neighbourhood of Dalston Lane; and of a young woman who had witnessed the affray and had rushed off to summon help. The only clue, in fact, to the assassin of any value was the word "rock," which a microscopic examination revealed, scratched on the blade of one of the chisels. And with this slender clue Inspector Glasse set to work to solve one of the most puzzling problems of crime.

The letters "rock" had most probably

been scratched on the chisel as a mark of identification by some man who had sharpened it; and the Inspector proceeded to make inquiries of every tool-manufacturer and setter and every employer of cabinet-makers in and around Dalston. For a whole year he vainly prosecuted his search far and wide, until at last his patience was rewarded. An old woman in the East of London remembered that the chisel had been brought to her late husband to be sharpened; and she herself had scratched the letters on it. Its owner was a man named Orrock, a young carpenter.

An organized search for Orrock, who was known in Dalston, was now set on foot, and he was at last run to earth in Coldbath Fields prison, where he was serving a twelve months' sentence for burglary.

Once caught, there was little difficulty in placing the noose round his neck. He was identified by the policemen who had seen him near Dalston Lane on the evening of the crime; two of his "pals" who had been in his company the same evening gave evidence against him; the man from whom he had bought the revolver recognized the bullets; and his sister declared that on the night of the murder he came home hatless and with his trousers badly torn. And, finally, a further examination of the chisel under a more powerful microscope revealed a very faint capital O and another "r," thus completing the name "Orrock."

IN 1885 an old man, in the Department of Savoy, was found lying dead on his back in his bed, his head pierced by a bullet; his pillow was covered with blood, the bed-clothes pulled up to his chin; and on the outside of the coverlet, half-way down, lay a small crucifix. On pulling down the bed-clothes it was found that an old blood-stained blue blouse covered the man's chest; his arms were stretched out along each side of the body, and in the right hand was clasped a revolver, held so tightly that it required no little force to release it. The bed was perfectly tidy; there was no evidence of any struggle.

The matter was investigated and the conclusion arrived at was that the man had committed suicide—that he had fired the fatal shot when sitting up in bed and had then fallen back on the pillow—dead.

Several years later, however, suspicion was drawn to a ne'er-do-weel son of the dead man, and the affair was re-opened, under the direction of a Dr. Lacassagne, an amateur detective of considerable skill, who set to work to prove that it was a case, not of suicide, but of murder. As the result of experiments in various hospitals and at the Morgue he was able to prove that, if a pistol is placed in the hand of a recently-dead man, when rigidity comes on the weapon is held so firmly that it can only be removed by force, precisely as in the case of a suicide.

From the fact that there was no trace of singeing on the hair, or scorching of the face, it was obvious that the shot could not have been fired close to the head, as would be the case with a suicide. The fact, too, that the man's eyes were found closed negatived the theory of suicide; for Dr. Lacassagne was able to prove from abundant evidence that, in cases of sudden and violent death, the eyes are either wide open or only partly closed. Thus the closing must have been done after death.

Moreover, as he pointed out, it would have been impossible for a man who died instantaneously, as in this case, to slip his arms under the blankets when quite dead, pull up the clothes to his chin, and place the crucifix outside the coverlet. It was thus clear that the man must have been murdered, his eyes closed, and his body and the bed arranged after death by someone else, probably his murderer. So conclusive was this evidence that, supplemented by other evidence which pointed to the son's guilt, a verdict of murder was given against him, which led to the full confession of his crime.

THAT civilized man has no monopoly of detective skill is proved by many a feat, bordering on the miraculous, with which the Australian aborigines are credited. The Australian native indeed is a born detective, with a keener scent than that of a bloodhound, a microscopic sight that can detect clues invisible to any other human eyes, and a sense of smell positively uncanny in its sensitiveness. So amazing are his feats that they seem almost incredible, as the following story—one among many equally astonishing—proves.

Some years ago a Victorian squatter disappeared on his way to Melbourne with a large sum of money, and there seemed to be no clue whatever to his fate. All that was known was that his horse had returned to the station without its rider, saddle, or bridle. All else was profound mystery. The Victorian police vainly wrestled with the problem until, in despair, they enlisted the service of a native employed on the station, with results that soon amazed them.

Starting from the missing man's house, the black walked with eyes downcast, and occasionally stooping to smell the ground,

for several miles until he came to a remote shepherd's hut, where he halted. Pointing to the earth at his feet, he said to the police who accompanied him: "Two white mans walk here." His companions closely examined the hard-baked ground, but could detect no smallest trace of a foot-mark.

Proceeding a few paces, the native exclaimed: "Fight here! Two mans have big fight! And here," he continued, walking a few paces farther, "here kill—kill!" On examining the spot indicated the police found that the earth had been disturbed; and beneath it they found a quantity of clotted blood.

It certainly looked as if murder might have been committed there. But, if so, what had become of the victim's body and of his slayer? This problem the black man set himself to solve. With bent head he resumed his walk with unfaltering steps towards the almost dried-up bed of a stream a mile or so distant, guided by foot-marks imperceptible to the others. For a few miles he proceeded up the bed of the stream, pausing at intervals at small pools in which the water had collected, until he came to a large pool on which a dark scum was floating. Here he halted, skimmed some of the scum into his hand, smelt it, tasted it, and said with conviction: "White man here!"

Grappling irons were produced, the pond was dragged, and from its dark depths was brought up a sack, weighted with stones, and containing the mutilated remains of the murdered squatter.

Suspicion naturally fell on the two shepherds who occupied the hut, which had in all probability been the scene of the crime, both men of bad character—one a ticket-of-leave convict, the other a deserter from the English Army. A thorough examination of the hut was made; in the outhouses were found a coat, a waistcoat, and two pairs of trousers, bearing dark stains like those of blood. And on the strength of this discovery the two men were placed under arrest and taken to Melbourne.

The police next set to work to discover the missing saddle-bags, which had no doubt held the squatter's money; and again they started the black fellow on the trail. This time he set out in a different direction, following by sight and smell the footsteps of the two men, though again not a trace of them was visible to the eyes of his companions. With unerring steps he proceeded mile after mile until he came to a gully, in which was a mound of stones.

Smell leather," he exclaimed, "here"—pointing to the pile. The stones were removed; and, sure enough, the saddle-bag was revealed; and in it was found the squatter's gold to the value of over two thousand pounds. The bag had doubtless been buried by the assassins under the heap of stones for removal later, when it was considered safe.

The evidence, thanks to the uncanny cleverness of the native tracker, was now complete. The two shepherds were brought to trial, and received the sentence of death they so well deserved.

WHAT detective of fiction, we wonder, has performed a feat as wonderful as this? A short time ago the body of a woman was found on the top of a mountain near Haverstraw, in New York State. It had been lying there so long that little more than the skeleton remained; and there was not the slightest clue to the identity of the woman.

The cleverest detectives in the States had to confess that they were completely baffled, and the crime was about to be added to the long list of mysteries that defy solution, when Mr. Grant Williams, a retired officer of the New York City Police, who had made a life-long study of anthropology and the allied sciences, offered his assistance, with results little short of miraculous.

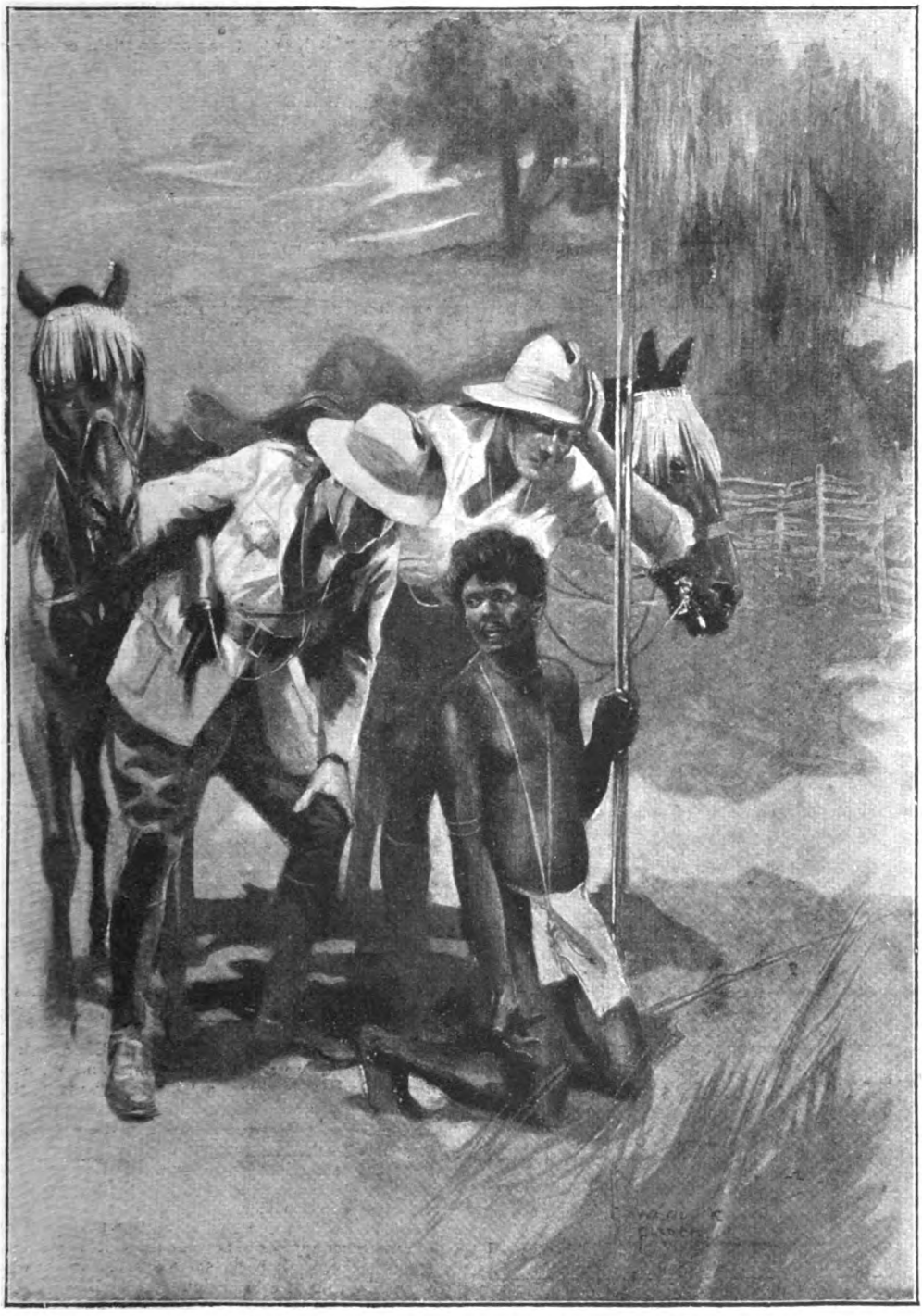
Within half an hour of seeing the remains, we are told, he informed the police that the skeleton was that of a girl of mixed Polish-Irish ancestry. He added that she had a violent temper and was probably mentally defective.

Then Williams took the dead girl's skull; and, with a quantity of plasticene, using the contours of the face as a guide, he proceeded to remodel her features. He constructed dummy shoulders and round them draped a blouse found near the body. On the top of the skull he arranged a quantity of hair of a colour corresponding to that on the portion of the scalp remaining on the head, and arranged it as it appeared to him to have been dressed in life.

The police then sent for officials of a neighbouring institution for mentally defective women, without telling them for what reason their presence was required.

To the amazement of the detectives, who had scoffed at Williams and his methods, they recognized the face at once. It was that of Lilian White, an inmate of the home, who had disappeared into the mountains some months before with a wild creature known as "the cave man."

The relatives of Lilian White were summoned, and the resemblance proved to be so startling that one sister of the dead girl collapsed in hysterics.



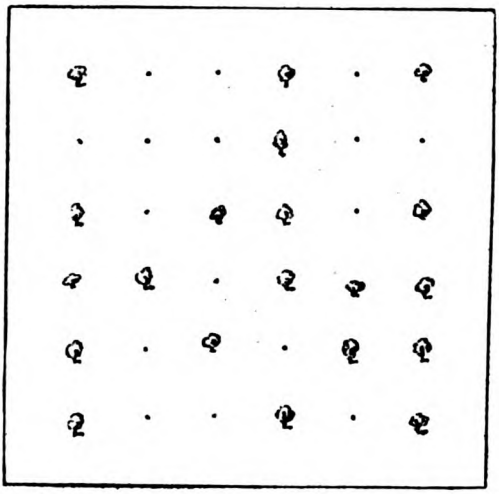
The native exclaimed: "Fight here! Two mans have big fight! And here," he continued, walking a few paces farther, "here kill—kill!"

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

615.—A PLANTATION PUZZLE.

A MAN had a small plantation of thirty-six trees planted in the form of a square. Some of these died and had to be cut down, in the positions indicated by the dots in our illustration. How is it possible to put up six straight fences across the field so that every one



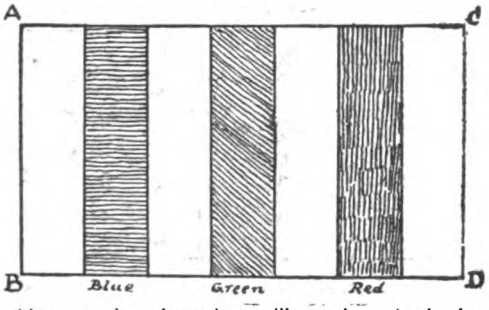
of the remaining twenty trees shall be in a separate enclosure? As a matter of fact, twenty-two trees might be so enclosed by six straight fences if their positions were a little more accommodating, but we have to deal with the trees as they stand in regular formation, which makes all the difference.

616.—A WORD SQUARE.

A DYING *fourth*, within his cell, upraised
The *first* of his poor weary eyes and gazed.
Secure from *third* of life he hither came,
Nor longed for gold or *fifth*, for power or fame.
His end had come—as come it ever will—
The blood in every *second* of his *sixth* stood still,
And all was quiet in that lonely place.
Let those who may a word-square herein trace.

617.—THE NEW FLAG.

A NEWLY-CONSTITUTED kingdom required a flag, which was to be three vertical coloured stripes on a



white ground, as shown in our illustration. A selection from ten different colours was allowed and material for three stripes of every colour was supplied (and the necessary white), so that any colour might occur once, twice, or three times in a flag. In how many different ways might the flag be made? Note, in the example given, that if A B is against the staff it is a different flag from one with C D nearest the staff, whereas in some cases (such as three red stripes) such a reversal would not be different. Though our flag represents two, it is only one in the count.

618.—PUZZLES IN A GARDEN.

MY friend Tompkins loves to spring on you little puzzling questions on every occasion, but they are never very profound. I was walking round his garden with him the other day, when he pointed to a rectangular flower-bed and said, "Now, if I had made that bed 2ft. broader and 3ft. longer it would have been 64 square feet larger; but if it had been 3ft. broader and 2ft. longer it would then have been 68 square feet larger. What is its length and breadth?" Well——!

Later on I happened to be discussing the tenancy of his property, when he informed me that there was a 99 years lease. I asked him how much of it had already expired, and expected a direct answer. But his reply was that two-thirds of the time past was equal to four-fifths of the time to come, so I had to work it out for myself. The task was not a difficult one, nor will it probably be found so by the reader.

619.—A CHARADE.

MY *first*, attained to lofty state,
Amongst sweet singers is renowned;
My *next* is hateful to the horse;
My *whole* in gardens will be found.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

611.—PERPETUAL CHECK.

I HAVE received the following solution from J. M in three moves: 1. P—K B 3, P—K 4; 2. K—B 2, B—B 4, ch.; 3. K—Kt 3, Q—Kt 4, ch., etc. Black can now force a perpetual check by playing alternately Q—R 4 and Q—Kt 4.

612.—MARKET TRANSACTIONS.

THE man bought 19 cows for £95, 1 sheep for £1, and 80 rabbits for £4, making together 100 animals at a cost of £100.

613.—TWO LITTLE PARADOXES.

IF W and E were stationary points, and W, as at present, on your left when advancing towards N, then after passing the Pole and turning round W would be on your right, as stated. But W and E are not fixed points, but *directions* round the globe; so wherever you stand facing N you will have the W direction on your left and the E direction on the right.

In the reflection in a mirror you are not "turned round," for what appears to be your right hand is your left, and what appears to be your left side is the right. The reflection sends back, so to speak, exactly what is opposite to it at every point.

614.—AN ENIGMA.

THE answer is the figure 8.

To face end of Text.

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This **Bute** Coat will keep you dry and comfortable in a solid week of wet. It is made of light, smooth Oilskin, with wide skirt, Raglan shoulders, belt at back, inner storm cuffs, and two big pockets. In black, lightweight, non-sticking Oilskin, **27/6**. In colours, **32/6**; Two-colour Oilskin Hat with adjustable brim, Bute quality material, to match, **7/6**. Ladies' Rubber Wellingtons, warm lined, from **17/6**

ILLUSTRATED LIST POST FREE,

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The Lace with the extra long wear

HURCULACES are made in many varieties for Ladies', Men's and Children's Boots and Shoes in all the popular shades.

Ask for HURCULACES and you know that you are getting the best possible value for your money, prove for yourself that they are THE LACES WITH THE EXTRA LONG WEAR

Stocked by the leading Boot Shops, Drapers and Outfitters.

MANUFACTURED BY FAIRE BROS & Co. Ltd., LEICESTER

I WAS BALD

I was born in 1852, and, just as my photograph shows, I now have a full growth of hair. Yet thirty years ago I found scurf upon my scalp, and my hair began to fall away, until after a while I was classed as a "bald-head."

Call it vanity if you will, it was displeasing to me to remain bald. Furthermore, I believe it is our birthright to have plenty of hair upon our heads.

SEEKING A HAIR GROWTH.

It is scarcely necessary for me to state that, in the hope of growing new hair, I had experimented with one thing and another—the usual array of lotions, pomades, shampoos, etc.—without getting any benefit. At that age I looked older than I do now. Later, when I became a trader in the Indian Territory of U.S.A., some of the Cherokees jocosely called me "The white brother without a scalp lock."

AMERICAN INDIANS NEVER BALD.

I never saw a bald Cherokee Indian. Both braves and squaws almost invariably use tobacco, eat irregularly, frequently wear tight bands around their heads, and do other things which are commonly ascribed as causes of baldness. Yet they all possess beautiful hair. What, then, is their secret?

Being on the spot—most of the time at Tahlequah—and upon very friendly terms, it was easy for me to gain information from the usually taciturn Cherokees. I learned exactly how American Indians grow long, luxuriant hair, avoiding baldness and eliminating scurf or dandruff.

MY HAIR GREW AGAIN.

Then I applied these secrets to myself, and my hair began to grow. There was no messing or trouble about it. The new hairs emanated from my scalp as profusely as grass grows on a perfectly-kept lawn. I have had a plenitude of hair ever since.

Numerous friends of mine in Philadelphia and elsewhere asked me what had performed such a miracle, and I gave them the Indian Elixir. Their hair soon grew over bald spots. Scurf disappeared wherever it existed—and it never returned. That these persons were amazed and delighted is stating the fact mildly.

The hair that grows is strong and silk-like. It has beautiful lustre and imparts the appearance of health and vigour.

A TESTING BOX FOR YOU.

To any person who writes a request for it and encloses sixpence in stamps (or a P.O.) a testing box of Kotalko will be sent post paid. Mention Mrs., Mr., Miss, Rev., etc., and sign name plainly. Kindly address your letter to J. HART BRITTAIN, LTD., 2, PERCY STREET (201 A.T.), LONDON, W.1. After using the testing package, when you observe that your hair is beginning to grow—even if you have been bald for years—you may obtain a further supply at a modicum.

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of luxurious perfumed, Turkish, or medicated baths in your own home? The medical profession advise the Century Thermal Bath Cabinet as the cheapest and easiest way of cleansing the system, and curing Uric Acid complaints. Apart from the medicinal point of view, there is no more convenient way of taking Turkish, medicated, or perfumed baths than by this Cabinet. There is no cumbersome furniture, it can be folded up and put away when not in use. It will last a lifetime with perfect safety. Write for Booklet No. 712 and full information about this valuable Bath Cabinet. Portable, can be fitted up in a minute. Mention STRAND MAGAZINE. *Temperature regulated at will of bather. Prices from £4 & upwards.*

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Years have passed since I was freed from the drink habit. Since then I have been the means of aiding **thousands of men and women** to give up alcohol. Some have willingly taken treatment, others have been saved without knowing the cause.

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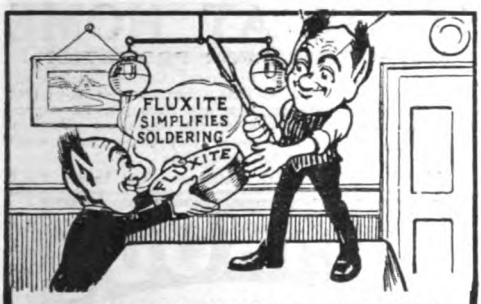

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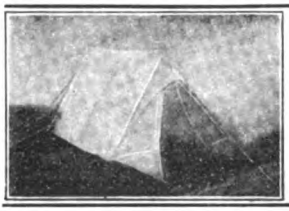

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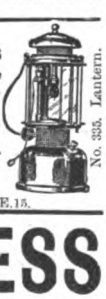

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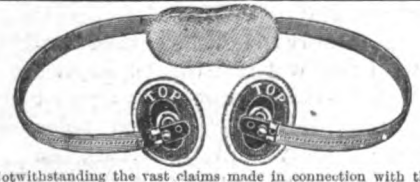

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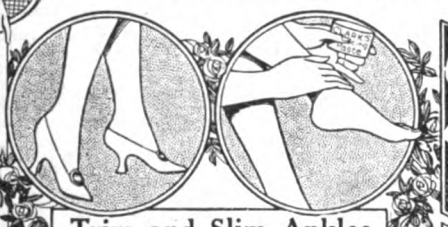

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE

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SEE PAGE 22.

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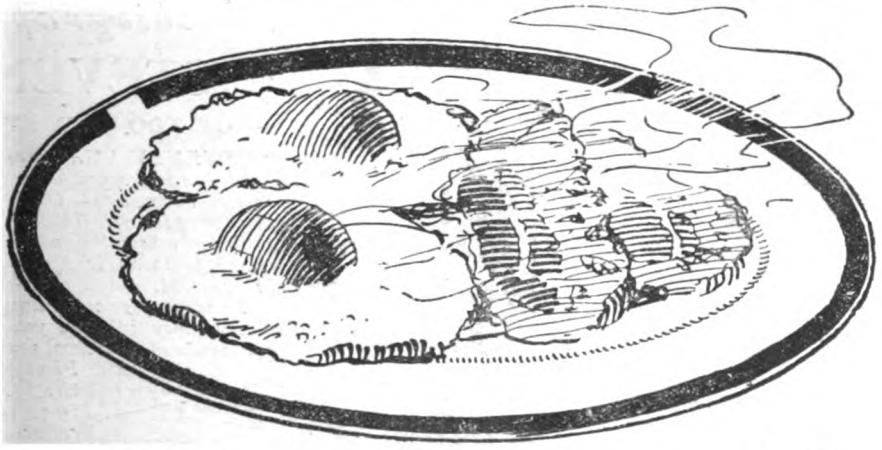

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Look for this label: it guards you from getting a Baby-Rug without a character.

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The OTTERBURN Baby-Rug as a Pram Cover.

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Hey, Jimmy, hand back that tin—

You're not the only one in the family with a sweet tooth, son!

Here's your mother—mean to say you haven't given her any? . . . you're no son of mine, James.

What? . . . you've put half the tin on one side for mother because you knew that when I came home I'd want nearly all? You sinner, you rascal, you . . . son of your old dad—HAND OVER THAT TIN!

The goodness of Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe appeals to every member of the family . . . and never ceases to appeal. It's only really good things that always taste really good.

Eat more good toffee

Sold loose by weight at 8d. per ¼-lb., and in Baby Oval Tins and Tall Tins at 1/3 each, Junior Oval Tins and Tall Tins at 2/6 each, and 4-lb. Tin.

MACKINTOSH'S
Toffee-de-Luxe

Egg & Cream-de-Luxe. Almond Toffee-de-Luxe. Cocoanut-de-Luxe.
Mint-de-Luxe. Café-de-Luxe. Plain Toffee-de-Luxe. De-Luxe Assortment.

Furniture of Economy, Comfort and Wear

CASH OR EASY PAYMENTS — Free and Safe Delivery

by Motor Traction, or Rail to nearest Railway Station.

A SUITE WHICH WILL GIVE SATISFACTION IN WEAR.

If not approved of, can be returned at our expense, and any money paid will be refunded in full.

3-PIECE CHESTERFIELD SUITE. Comprising SETTEE, seat 4 ft. by 2 ft. deep, overall 5 ft. 6 ins., with adjustable drop end, measuring when down 6ft., height of back 3 ft. Pair of EASY CHAIRS, seats 2 ft. by 1 ft. 6 ins., mounted on Turned Stumps and Castors. The Interior Upholstery Work is of the best. English Web, Coppered Steel Springs, all double tied with linen twine. Superior Canvas, Coir Fibre, Washed Wool and Hair only being used, thus ensuring to the Purchaser lasting and comfortable Settee and Easy Chairs, with loose Kapok down cushions, suitable for any room, and guaranteed to stand the Hard Wear of every-day use. Settee, Cash £16. Easy Chairs £8 10s. each.

Finished in High-Grade Tapestry. Patterns sent for customers' own selection.

3-Piece "PEMBROKE" Soundly-Upholstered Chesterfield Suite.

Three Pieces, £32 10s. Cash, or £3 with Order and 33 Payments of £1 Monthly.

FREE Our Fully Illustrated Catalogue, together with Terms, etc. A perusal of this will save you Pounds in Furnishing.

GLOBE Furnishing Co. (Dept. E), Pembroke Place, LIVERPOOL.
J. R. GRANT, Proprietor.

Faith Bevan and Gladys Jennings starting off for a spin on their Rudge Combination.
Ask for a free set of Film Favourites Postcards.

Pay £26 10 5 down and get a Rudge Motor Bicycle (*fully insured*)

For this small deposit we will put in your hands a completely equipped Rudge Motor Bicycle, covered by a comprehensive Insurance Policy. You may pay the balance out of your earnings at the rate of only £5 (plus 1d.) per month for 12 months thereafter. Why not realise now your dream of having a Rudge of your own? Write for full information about this simple, straightforward plan.

Rudge Multi

Get this little Rudge Book FREE

This handy Guide for the Motor Bicycle purchaser is freely illustrated, and contains just the information you want to know about the Rudge. Send for a copy to Rudge-Whitworth, Ltd. (Dept. 201), Coventry, or to Dept. 201, at any of the following Motor Bicycle Shops:—

LONDON—230, Tottenham Court Road, W.1.
BEDFORD—41, High Street.
BRADFORD—6, Manningham Lane.
BRISTOL—17, Queen's Road.
BRIGHTON—134a, Western Road.
DERBY—4, Babbington Buildings.
EASTBOURNE—10, Terminus Road.
EXETER—28, Sidwell Street.
GLOUCESTER—35, Westgate Street.
HULL—46, King Edward Street.
LEEDS—49-57, Guildford Street.
LEICESTER—25b, Humberstone Gate.
LIVERPOOL—101, Bold Street.
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NEWCASTLE—66, Clayton Street.
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WOLVERHAMPTON—17, Victoria Street.
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GLASGOW—16, West Nile Street.

Her Hands are Always Soft and White

She uses TWO Creams

To protect your hands from blemishes caused by housework and out-of-door sport—use TWO creams. Apply a light touch of Pond's Vanishing Cream once or twice during the day—and before retiring to rest apply Pond's Cold Cream.

Pond's Vanishing Cream disappears instantly—no shiny or sticky after-effects.

Pond's Cold Cream cleanses the pores and keeps the skin clear, soft and supple.

The regular use of these TWO creams will keep your hands always soft and white—and make your complexion like the petal of a rose. They protect the skin from any ill-effects of sun, wind, and rain. POND'S CREAMS never promote the growth of hair.

"TO SOOTHE AND SMOOTH YOUR SKIN."

Both Creams of all Chemists and Stores in handsome Opal Jars, 1/8 and 2/6, also Collapsible Tubes, 7½d. (handbag size) and 1/-

Pond's Cold Cream and Vanishing Cream

POND'S EXTRACT CO. (Dept. 30), 71, Southampton Row, London, W.C.1.

The "Grey Hair" Problem

Solved by a New Discovery

Colour Restored Gradually, Permanently, Safely

"Nuctone" is an entirely new discovery, which gradually restores the colour to the Hair, without Dyeing.

There is no sudden change from greyness to the natural colour of the Hair, as with Dyeing. The colour comes gradually, but permanently and safely.

Guaranteed not to contain Sulphur, Lead, or any other injurious ingredients. Everyone who has tried "Nuctone" is delighted with the results. If your Hair is going grey, send for a bottle of "Nuctone" to-day. Price **6/6.**

"Nuctone" for Dark Hair, "Nuctone" Eclaire for Fair Hair. "Nuctone" Concentré for gentlemen.

Obtainable from all leading Chemists, Hairdressers and Stores, including Harrods, Barkers, Whiteleys, London; Lewis's, Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham, or by post (inland 6d. extra) from

J. STEWART, LTD., 80, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1.

ON GROWING RICH

"It is sad to grow old; one has less time left for growing rich" may have been true when Voltaire wrote these words, but it does not hold good to-day. Modern Endowment Assurance has altered all that.

If you effect an Endowment Assurance while you are young you grow rich as you grow old, and a man of 25 can, by means of a Bounty Policy of THE STANDARD, for an outlay (allowing for Income Tax Rebate) of £8 : 11 : 7 per annum, or less than 15/- per month, secure the following successive benefits:—

On attaining age 50 a payment of..		£106 : 5 : 0
" " " 55	a further payment of	£107 : 10 : 0
" " " 60	" "	£108 : 15 : 0
" " " 65	" "	£110 : 0 : 0

***In addition*:—**

If death occurs before age	50 a payment of	£400
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" "	55 & 60 "	£200
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Write for Explanatory Leaflet "H. 17" to

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(Established 1825).

Head Office: **3, George Street, EDINBURGH.**

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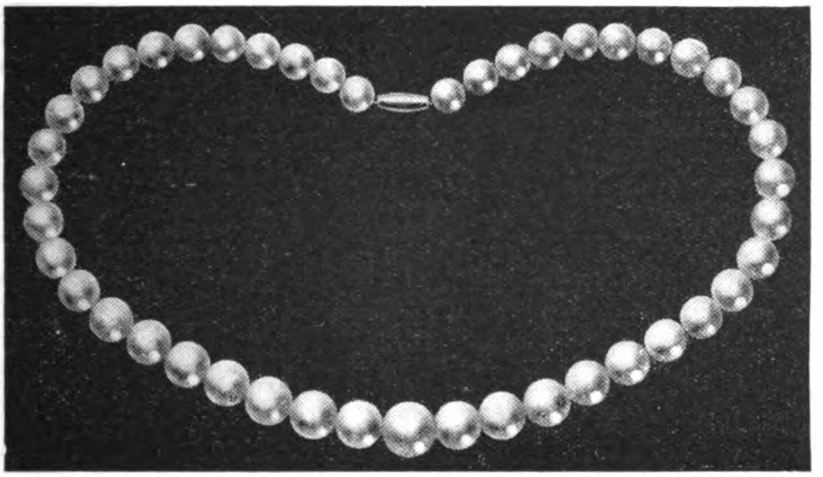

The Points
of a
Perfect Pearl

WHAT does a good judge of pearls look for in valuing them ?
Delicacy of Tone and Texture, softness of Sheen, elusive subtlety of Colouring and Lustre, natural Shaping and those indefinable qualities that ensure Long Life. In the finest pearls of the Orient he should find all these.

But to-day no one need incur the great expense of owning such costly luxuries. Science has shown how perfect facsimiles of natural pearls can be produced that deceive even the best judges.

All the qualities that make the Queen of Gems esteemed everywhere are to be found in

Ciro Pearls

The other day a connoisseur was looking over some pearl necklaces in a West End jewellers. His verdict was that some marked £500 or more seemed no better than these, and if he had to choose between them without knowing the price he would choose CIRO PEARLS.

Yet in spite of the established reputation they have attained, we do not ask you to take this opinion or our statements entirely on trust. We give everyone an opportunity to test the truth of our claims. If you come to our showrooms you will be convinced, or if you cannot, avail yourself of

OUR UNIQUE OFFER.

ON receipt of One Guinea we will send you a necklet of Ciro Pearls, 16 inches long, with clasp and case complete, or a ring, brooch, ear-rings, or any other Ciro Pearl jewel in hand-made gold settings. If, after comparing them with real or other artificial pearls, they are not found equal to the former or superior to the latter, return them to us within fifteen days and we will refund your money. Ciro Pearl necklets may also be obtained in any length required. We have a large staff of expert pearl stringers.

Latest descriptive booklet No. 12 sent post free on application.

Ciro Pearls Ltd.
39 Old Bond Street London W.1 Dept 12

Our Showrooms are on the First Floor, over Lloyds Bank, near Piccadilly.

Luxurious Comfort

Those who have experienced the comfort of a Jaeger Camelhair Gown will understand what first-class comfort really is.

You may be certain of entire satisfaction if your gown is made of Jaeger Pure Undyed Camelhair. It does not readily soil and is easily cleaned.

Jaeger Gown
(N. 247)
Camelhair **£4 19 6**
Dyed "Fleece" **£4 17 6**

Ask for the Jaeger Gown Booklet.

JAEGER
Pure Camelhair.

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126, Regent Street, W.1.
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30, Sloane Street, S.W.1
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131a, Victoria Street, S.W.1.
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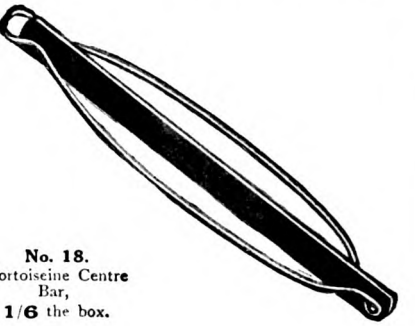
Jaeger Agents in every town and throughout the British Empire.

"Nature alone won't wave the hair, Hinde's Wavers, too, must do their share."

HINDE'S WAVERS



No. 18.
Tortoiseine Centre Bar,
1/6 the box.

No. 20.
For Waving, with Heated Bar down Centre Tube.
1/6 the box

In different patterns, are obtainable at all Stores, Hairdressers and Drapery Houses. Crude imitations which are hurtful to the hair may be sometimes offered. It is necessary to see that the name "Hinde's" is on each article.

WHY BE GREY?

TATCHO-TONE, the ally of Tatcho, the wonderful discovery of Mr. Geo. R. Sims, restores grey or faded hair to its original colour with one application. Has just to be combed through the grey strands, when the natural colour, with the youthful vigour and lustre, is brought back, and remains washable. A medical certificate accompanies each bottle. A test can be made on a strand of the hair. For this purpose a trial phial will be mailed in plain wrapper on receipt of 8d. in stamps. State shade required. Tatcho-Tone is obtainable of Chemists and Stores everywhere—Price 4/6.
The GEO. R. SIMS H. R. CO., 5, Great Queen St., London, W.C.

TRIAL PHIAL POST FREE 8D

CLARNICO

Another Clarnico Triumph

CLARNICO LILY BRAZILS

THE NEW CONFECTION

CLARNICO LILY BRAZILS are new in the sense that their particular combination of good things has not been made before.

¶ We have had almonds blended with Caramel—the well-known **CLARNICO LILY CARAMELS**—and delicious they are, and a great favourite. But even the greatest almond enthusiast likes a change sometimes. Hence

CLARNICO LILY BRAZILS.

¶ This charming confection consists of choice Brazil-nut kernels—which everyone knows and likes—and a new Clarnico Caramel of a flavour, texture and smoothness never previously attained in our 50 years' experience.

¶ **CLARNICO LILY BRAZILS** are dainty clean-cut morsels of lusciousness, each wrapped separately, and are sold loose by weight **at**

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CLARKE, NICKOLLS & COOMBS, LTD.,
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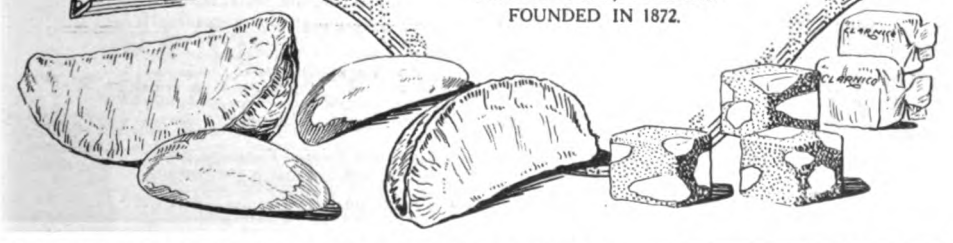
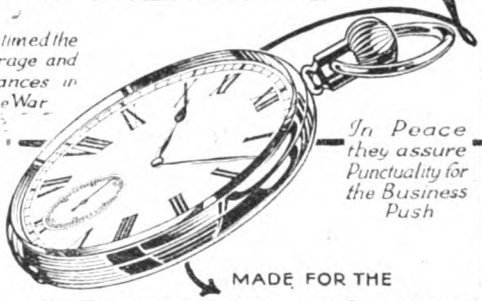


LILY BRAZILS

They timed the Barrage and Advances in the War

THE SAME

PRECISION



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Brand New High Grade 15 Jewel ¾ Plate Compensated English Lever movement Expressly made for the ROYAL ARTILLERY as BARRAGE TIMERS Re-cased in Heavy English Hall-marked SOLID GOLD CASES

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10 YEARS WRITTEN GUARANTEE GIVEN

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The Broad Arrow &D as above which appear on each of these Watches is the Government stamp These stand as your safeguard & guarantee of reliability.

296-298 PENTONVILLE ROAD, KINGS CROSS N.1

Bravingtons

ESTABLISHED 100 YEARS

CITY ADDRESS 71 LUDGATE HILL E.C.

Barratts Double Sole Invention

Smart City Style—Usual Light Weight—100 per cent. Added Wear—BY POST—for Factory Price, 27/6

This simple and wonderfully successful idea doubles the life of your boots, protects you perfectly against damp, and ensures smart, light-weight footwear. These correctly-cut Derby Pattern Black Box Calf Boots (selected, substantial, supple uppers) are provided with an extra clump sole of best butt hide English Sole leather. This provides

Style 1655 Direct by Post

27/6

POST FREE

Postage Abroad Extra. Balmoral Pattern Same Price. Style 1614.

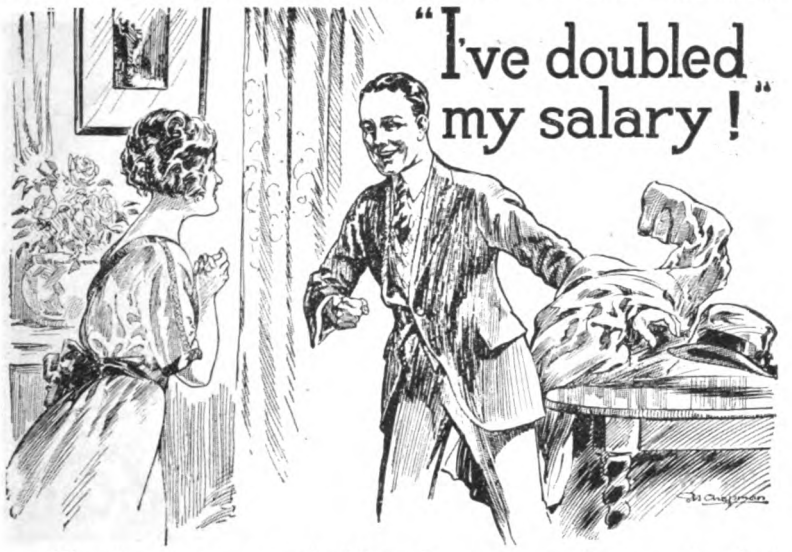
Remarkable Advantages for Health and Economy from this Double Sole

The damp cannot penetrate through to the first sole, and the insole can never deteriorate. When repair is necessary the clump sole is easily removed without tearing the welts, cracking the insole or straining the uppers. If clump soles are timely renewed the boots will wear indefinitely—certainly twice as long as ordinary boots. The workmanship and all materials are first grade, and the price is the factory price—one modest factory profit only—all middlemen's charges cut out.

Order Now.—State Style 1655 and **give** usual size or Footshape, got by sitting down, resting stockinged foot on paper and running up ight lead pencil round. Sizes: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, in three widths—medium, wide, extra wide. Home orders enclose 27/6 in cheque or money order (size 12 1/- extra). Overseas orders send postage also. With Cash on Delivery orders send 1/6 only. Legal guarantee of satisfaction or cash refund given. Post direct to Barratt's factory.

W. BARRATT & CO., Ltd., 20, 'Footshape' Boot Works, Northampton

Send 3d. postage for Barratt's 115-page Illustrated Catalogue.



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STRAND MAG.—October.

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Perfume of Freesia

Fascinating Freesia

An exquisite Flower Fragrance of supreme beauty. It adds to the Toilet a note of refinement and elegance.

The ***Freesia Series*** *also includes Face Powder, Brilliantine, Hair Lotion, Toilet Water, Bath Salts, Talcum Powder, and Toilet Soap.*

PRICES.

Perfume - 5/-, 8/6, 11/6, 17/6 per bottle
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Of all Chemists, Perfumers and Stores, and from :

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John Peel Brand

EMBROCATION

IMMEDIATELY ALLEVIATES ACHES, PAINS, STIFFNESS, RHEUMATISM and LUMBAGO

Cooper's is a creamy white, clean handling preparation that rubs right in and quickly reaches the pain.

A user writes :
"Since my accident I have suffered from very severe periodical attacks of sciatica and rheumatism . . . . Your embrocation is everything that is claimed for it and more . . . . the first application gives relief."

YOUR CHEMIST SELLS IT.

For Household Use - - 2/-
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WILLIAM COOPER & NEPHEWS, LTD., BERKHAMSTED, HERTS.

Real Irish Linen.

HOME NEEDLEWORK.

The demand for our remnant bundles of pure linen is increasing daily. Careful housewives appreciate the economic value of these bundles :—

Remnant bundles of the best quality Pillow Linen to make six Pillow Cases, size 20 x 30 inches, per bundle **21/-**

Remnant Bundles of White Art Linen for Afternoon Tea Cloths, Tray Cloths, etc., per bundle **11/9**

Remnant Bundles of Irish Linen Huckaback Towelling, sufficient to make six full-size Bedroom Towels, per bundle **12 6**

IRISH LINEN TRAY CLOTHS.

Dainty Snow White Hemstitched Linen Tray Cloths :
Size 14 by 20 inches, 4 cloths for **5/6.**
" 15 by 22 " 4 " **6/6.**

DAMASK TABLECLOTHS.

White Irish Damask Tablecloths at almost half price. Good useful quality for breakfast and supper cloths in handsome floral and conventional designs. We can recommend these cloths for everyday use.
Size 54 by 54, 5/11 each.
" 70 by 70, 9/- "
" 70 by 86, 11/- "

DAMASK SERVIETTES.

A large quantity of tossed and soiled Damask Serviettes for everyday use, mixed designs and sizes. Only 7/9 per dozen.

Our Guarantee *Any goods not approved can be returned to be exchanged or money refunded.*

For all orders under £1 add 9d. for postage.

WRITE NOW FOR FREE CATALOGUE.

Hutton's

95, Main Street, LARNE, Ireland.

Don't Scratch Teeth

Beautify them in this scientific way

Don't try to whiten teeth by use of harsh abrasive. The enamel, if you harm it, won't come back. Polishing agents should be mild, as in Pepsodent.

Combat the dingy film. Do it as millions now are doing—in this scientific way. Then the prettier teeth you see everywhere now will come to you and yours.

The cloudy film

Your teeth are coated with a viscous film. It clings to teeth, gets between the teeth and stays there. When not combated, it forms coats which are the basis of tartar. Film absorbs stains, making the teeth look dingy. Those cloudy teeth rob millions of much beauty.

Film also holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth, and the acid may cause decay.

Ways to end it

Film has been the great tooth problem. Old methods did not end it. So well-brushed teeth discoloured and decayed. Tooth troubles have been constantly increasing. Now dental science, after long research, has found two ways to fight film. Able authorities have proved their efficiency. Careful people the world over now see and feel the results.

A new-type tooth paste has been created, made to meet modern requirements. The name is Pepsodent. These two film combatants are embodied in it for daily application.

Five new effects

Pepsodent brings five effects which science now demands. One is to multiply the starch digestant in the saliva. That is there to digest starch deposits on teeth before they ferment and form acids. One is to multiply the alkalinity of the saliva. That is Nature's agent for neutralizing mouth acids which may cause tooth decay. It leaves the teeth so highly polished that film less easily clings.

All five effects come from every application. So film, starch and acids are constantly combated. Forces are created which night and day fight enemies of teeth.

To countless homes, all the world over, this has brought a new era in teeth cleaning. The results will be life-lasting.

Send the coupon. Note how clean the teeth feel after using. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as the film-coats disappear. The results will surprise and convince you. Cut out the coupon now.

Pepsodent MARK TRADE

The New-Day Dentifrice

A scientific way to combat film—to keep teeth whiter, cleaner, sounder, without harm. Now advised by leading dentists everywhere.

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900

10-DAY TUBE FREE

THE PEPSODENT COMPANY,
(Dept. 131), 40, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C. 1.

Mail 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent to—

Name.....

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Give full address. Write plainly.
Only one tube to a family. STRAND MAG./Oct.

42/- "Mattamac" (Reg'd.)

You can't *possibly* get wet in the

Feather-weight **Stormproof.**

Don't risk disappointment with an imitation. Get the *genuine* "Mattamac" Stormproof, which is labelled "Mattamac" beneath the Coat-hanger. *That* is your safeguard.

A "Mattamac" is identical in appearance with the usual five-guinea Weatherproof. In utility, also, it equals its much-more-costly Competitor. It wears as long, weighs one-third and is absolutely Waterproof. Light and compact-folding, Wind Chill, and Wet proof, a "Mattamac" is the Ideal Coat for Going-away Wear. Take one with you wherever you go this Autumn.

WEIGHT 19 ozs.

FOLDS INTO THIS SIZE.

Fits the jacket pocket or Attaché Case.

(Reg'd. Trade Mark.)

42/-

For Man, Woman, and Child. Also made for Equestrian, Military, and Sporting Wear.

"Matta" Fabric is exceedingly compact. The coat worn by the 6-ft. man beneath, when folded, just made this handful.

This is an actual photograph of his hand and the "Mattamac" he wears, folded to fit snugly into his jacket pocket or handbag.

3 OZS. HEAVIER THAN AN UMBRELLA.

Sporting (19 oz.) Model, **42/-**

19 OUNCES WEIGHT 42/-

Belted Models (21¼ oz.), **47/6**

Belted Model, **47/6**

Colours:— ***Fawn, Olive, Tan, Grey, Black, and Blue Shades.***

Children's Models for all ages at size prices

Equestrian wide-skirted (22 oz.) Model (Fawn and Khaki only),

59/6

With Belt, (24½ ozs.), **65/-**

Illustrations are direct drawings from photos of stock "Mattamac" Stormproofs costing **42/-**; *Belted Models,* **47/6.**

In 6 shades, 11 Adult Models, and 40 sizes. Also for Children.

MADE FOR EVERY OUTDOOR PURPOSE.

Town and Country unbelted Models, in **Fawn, Olive, Grey, Tan, Black,** and **Blue, 42/-**; Belted Models for Adults, **47/6**; Military Models (unbelted **42/-**, belted **47/6**); wide-skirted Equestrian Models from **59/6**; and Children's Models for all ages at size prices. Made entirely from the genuine, hard-wearing, all-weather-proof "Matta" (Reg'd.) Fabric, with wind-cuffs, perpendicular pockets, lined shoulders, Raglan sleeves, roomy "under-arms," and the famous cut of Conduit Street.

"MATTAMAC" ART BOOKLET POST FREE, illustrating Adult and Children's Models. A p.c. brings Booklet and 6 colour Patterns of "Matta" Fabric, or you can safely order now.

SENT OUT ON SEVEN DAYS' FREE APPROVAL. You buy without risk. Send chest measurement **over** waistcoat (Ladies measure over Blouse), height, and remittance, stating colour, and your "Mattamac" will be sent post free in the U.K. (extra abroad). If you are not fully satisfied, you can return it within 7 days of receipt, and get your money back in full. Sold only at the London and Birmingham Showrooms, by certain accredited Provincial Agents, and through the Post from address below. If unable to call, write for "Mattamac" Booklet "26 A."

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NEW MIDLAND SHOWROOMS (Opposite Corporation St.), 134, NEW ST., BIRMINGHAM.

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Britain's Best Portable Gramophone.

PLAYS ANY KIND OF RECORD.

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Weight 12½lbs.

Tone-arm automatically lowers into Cabinet as the lid is closed. NO LOOSE PARTS TO RATTLE.

The "HANDEPHON" is entirely British made—motor, tone-arm, sound-box, cabinet, and every other part. Thus satisfaction is absolutely guaranteed. The model is the acme of portability and compactness. When closed, looks no bigger than an attaché case.

Use "Chromic" Needles on all your Records, 1/3 per 100. Each Point Plays TEN Records.

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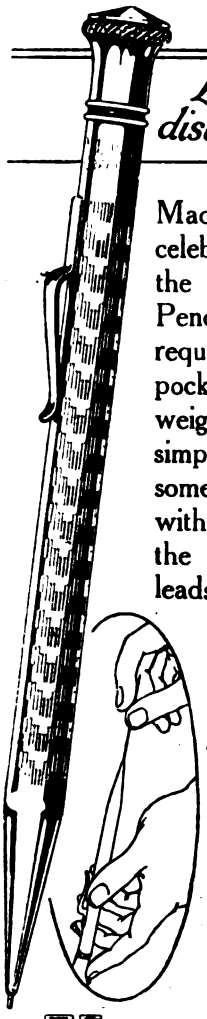

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The smoothest-running motor limousine cannot give greater comfort to its occupants than this TAN-SAD gives to Baby. "Comfort" is wrought into the spiral springs of toughened steel — 200 inches of them between wheels and body.

As for TAN-SAD dependability, just you examine the Pram—observe the thoroughness of manufacture, and remember the world-wide reputation of TAN-SAD for their famous Motor-Cycle Pillion Seat.

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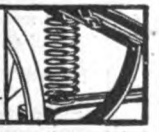

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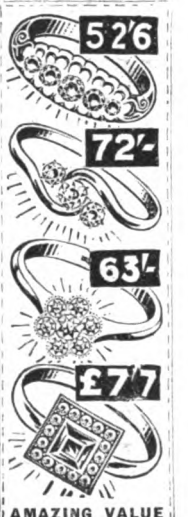

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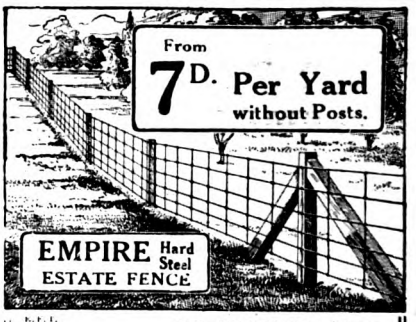

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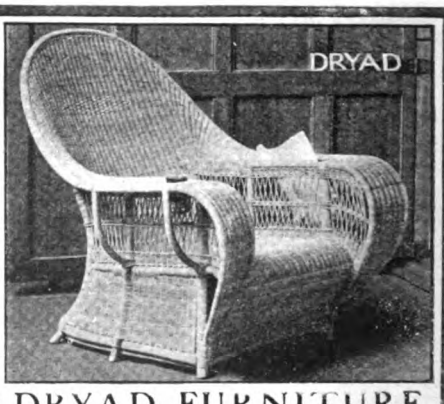

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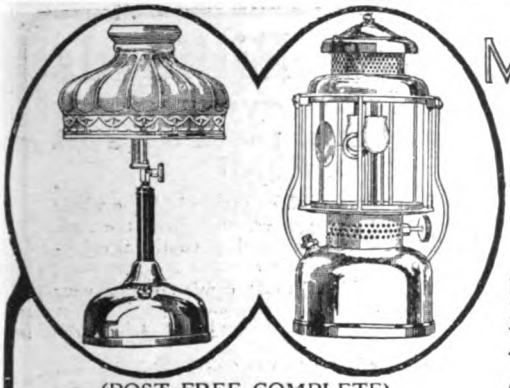

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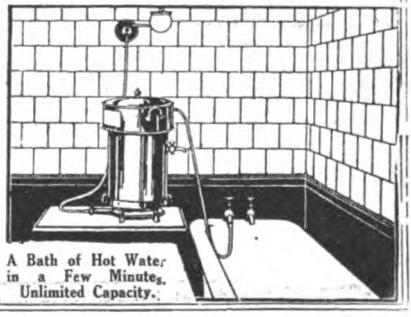

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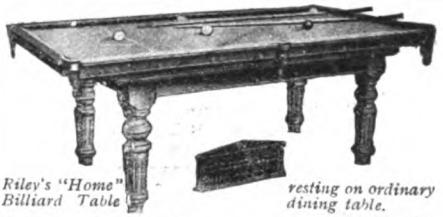

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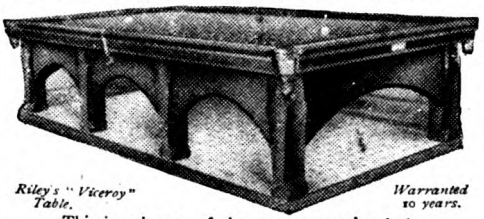

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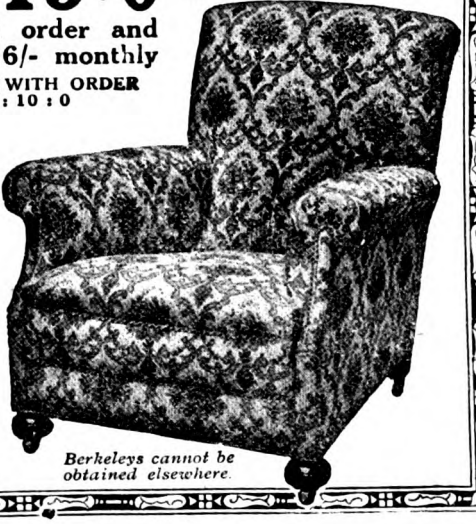

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Original Makers of Caramels in Great Britain.

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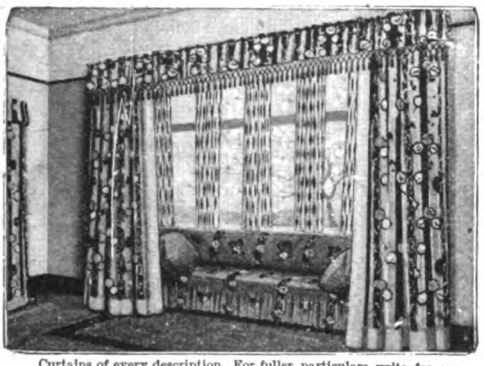

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I can positively cure sleeplessness, the worry habit, irritability, palpitation, sudden exhaustion, heaviness of limbs, or, in fact, any HEART, NERVE, or STOMACH TROUBLE.

If you are pessimistic, lacking in ambition, or without the energy to carry out your ambitions or perform your work satisfactorily, if everything seems a trial and a care instead of a joy and pleasure, it is a sure sign that you have become *neurasthenic*. In such case, you cannot possibly become the social or business success you were meant to be until you have regained health and fitness.

There is only one sure and certain method in the world to-day—THE INCH HOME TREATMENT. Pleasant and inexpensive, with results *PERMANENT*, it is worth its weight in Treasury notes to the nerve sufferer. If you have tried other methods without satisfaction, *don't hesitate*, write TO-DAY—that is the kind of case I like to get.

I hold thousands of testimonials from patients who could not last through an entertainment or stay in a crowd until they came to me. My treatment was put to a severe test during the war with numbers of shell-shock cases—the worst form of neurasthenia it is possible to have.

Remember, without treatment, nerve trouble usually ends in a nervous breakdown, after which a cure is more difficult to obtain.

TO THE MIDDLE-AGED.

I hold extraordinary testimonials from pupils over the age of sixty as to the wonderful rejuvenating powers of my treatment. I can add years to the life of all middle-aged patients, and at the same time give them renewed vigour. All letters treated in strict confidence. No charge for diagnosis or opinion.

All interested in the foregoing are invited to send a 3d. stamp and ask for "NERVE BOOKLET."

"HEALTH, STRENGTH, AND DEVELOPMENT."

The above is the title of an illustrated booklet showing how health, strength, and development can be improved out of all knowledge. This particularly appeals to the sportsman, the golfer who would improve at his game, the tennis player, boxer, cyclist, or motorist. The "H. S. D." system guarantees improved development and perfect health, cures rounded shoulders, flat chest, spinal curvature, and increases the height.

Only One Booklet sent to each applicant.

Please make it perfectly clear which booklet is required. Write to-day—"Health is the first wealth."

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(DEPT. S), PUTNEY, LONDON, S.W.15.

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In Box Calf, Double Soles, Welted. Also in Brown Willow. 119 Fittings.

30/-

Postage abroad extra.

1017. In Black Box Calf

CATALOGUE FREE.

TWENTY-FIVE thousand customers in one year were fitted to perfection with this one style of boot. Could a better guarantee be given of fit, comfort and style?

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Drink your own health every morning in

MINERAL SPRING

TRADE MARK

HEALTH GRANULES

Cooling, Refreshing, Sparkling. Nice to take.
Sold by Chemists and Druggists only in 1/- & 2/- sizes.
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All that is seen of the Receiver. Weighs only ½ oz.

Your Hearing Back.

Science has found a way to restore lost hearing without the use of cumbrous and unsightly appliances. The "**EARLUX PHONOPHOR**" is almost invisible. The receiver only weighs ½ oz., and rests lightly in the lobe of the ear, leaving both hands free. So confident are we of its efficiency that we offer you a **week's free use** of one in your own home, to enable you to convince yourself thoroughly before purchase.

Call for demonstration or write for full particulars to

THE DEAF APPLIANCE COMPANY
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EARLUX
Phonophor

...all you need when you get INDIGESTION....

is 2 or 3 tablets of Bisurated Magnesia with a sip of water. ***Instant Relief!*** Just feel the pain fade away, leaving you bright, buoyant and full of energy. A strong statement, yet remember that doctors prescribe this product, whilst hospitals use it and thousands praise it the world around. Bisurated Magnesia Tablets banish all such troubles as indigestion, dyspepsia and gastritis, because they remove the cause—the presence of harmful acid in the stomach. The moment you take a couple of Bisurated Magnesia Tablets, excess acid and fermentation cease to exist; you relish your food and it does you good. No habit formed except that of healthy digestion and good for young and old. Read the following little note received quite recently from a well-known Metropolitan Justice of the Peace; it is typical of notes and letters of praise we get by every post:

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"Saw your advt. in 'Pall Mall Gazette.' Obtained bottle 'Bismag' (*Bisurated Magnesia*). **Instant Relief.** Now carry the tablets with me."
(Signed) A LONDON J.P.

If you want instant relief from digestive misery, see how Bisurated Magnesia Tablets can help you. They cost but 1/3 a package, and are sold by chemists everywhere. When you have benefited, pass the good news along; tell your friends the one sure way to get rid of digestive pain is to take

..... 2 or 3 tablets of Bisurated Magnesia

Notice this word particularly when buying and so be on the safe side.

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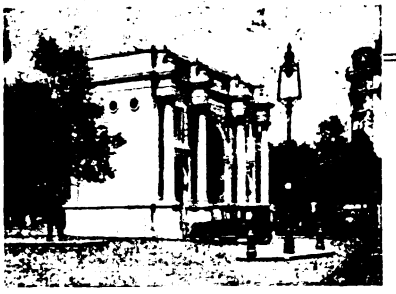

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19, NEW QUEBEC ST., OXFORD ST., MARBLE ARCH.

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21/- TO 80/- per pair

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Materials for every climate.

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CUT TO MEASURE from our **STRONG RIDING TWEEDS.** Perfect Style, Cut and Fit GUARANTEED from your own measurements. **97/6**

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CUT TO MEASURE from our **RIDING TWEEDS** are IDEAL for COUNTRY WEAR and will OUTLAST TWO ORDINARY SUITS. **97/6**

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BEDFORD RIDING BREECHES CO.

(Dept. M.S.),

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(Late of Gt. Titchfield Street.)

They don't fray

If people take the first laces offered without question as to quality or origin, they have only themselves to blame if the tags come off, the laces look shabby, fray quickly, break easily. Remember to ask for, and insist on ***Paton's Laces*** next time you buy. They have—

FAST TAGS that cannot come off.

HUNDREDS OF THREADS in each lace to give extra strength.

A SMART APPEARANCE which is permanent.

PATON'S BOOT & SHOE LACES

Paton's Laces are sold by all Bootmakers and Repairers at a few coppers per pair, and there are none to equal them.

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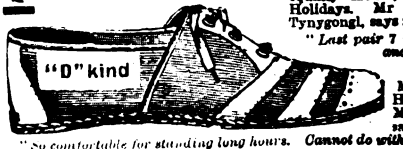
7 YEARS' WEAR!

Jute Soles last much longer than any others. Suit equally House, all Sports, Holidays. Mr Blackshaw, Tynygongl, says: "*Last pair 7 years in use and still good.*"



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"*So comfortable for standing long hours.*"

Say size and Colour.
Colour—Brown, Black, or White.

	Children's.	Ladies'.	Gents'.
A. Plain Shoes (without Strapping) ..	2/11	5/3	4/6
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Prices (post free), U.K.

"Ideal" for School Drill, Institutions, etc.
Special terms for quantities.

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Yankee - now 10/6

Ingersoll
Yankee
Radiolite
15/-

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This is an actual photograph of my DUGOUT BRIAR

It gains an attractive dignity from the rugged prominence of its natural grain. As-light-as-a-feather—because, by my Dugout process, all soft, spongy parts are removed from well-aged Briar root. Much cooler because this distributes heat over a wider surface. And the tough, gnarled sap-free root remaining means sweetness—lasting sweetness—from the first pipeful. See that all pipes are stamped "**ORLIK.**" none other are genuine.

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CONCENTRATED
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Makers: Brownhill-White Ltd. Leeds.

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From all good Grocers.

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TO KEEP YOUR HAT SMART.

in perfect shape, and get rid of those ugly dents. (Patent No. 152574.) The West Hat Grip is **small, neat, transparent**, and fits inside right into the fold of your hat just where you raise it. **It cannot fall out**, being fastened with small stitch, or special pin given with the Grip. The White line on the illustrated hat shows the position of the West Hat Grip inside. B.F.R. writes: "Please send me another of your Hat Grips. I got one about a year ago, and the hat in which it was sewn **looks just as good a shape as when new.**" F.A.H. writes: "Kindly forward another of your West Hat Grips. A brilliant success; fills a long-standing need."

Instructions given with each one. Price **1/6** only.

Of Hatters, Hosiers, Outfitters, etc., or post free from the Inventor,
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She Tells Men How to Banish Baggy Knees.

The World's Premier Male Impersonator writes:

"Every pair of trousers I wear is treated with 'Wray's Evercrease'—just once—that's all. Simple, satisfactory, and safe, and the trousers last longer and keep shape and smartness to the end of their service."

No Gum. No Rubber. Absolutely Waterproof.

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THE ORIGINAL PERMANENT DYE

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No connection with any other Soap Makers.

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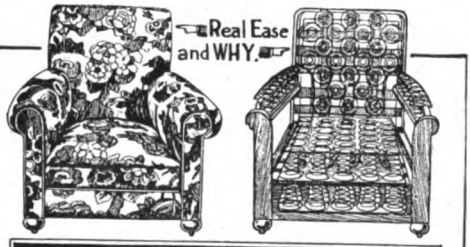

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IT is what's *inside* a chair that counts for comfort. Inside Mortons' "Century" Chair are OVER 100 SPRINGS, and these are assembled in careful relation to one another within a framework, so as to provide just the proper easeful support all over. The filling is of superior fibre and hair, enhancing the comfort. The covering you can choose yourself. In serviceable Tapestry, the chair (36 ins. high, 36 ins. wide, and 36 ins. deep) costs only **9 Gns.** Smaller size chair (33 ins., with 75 springs), **£7 : 15 : 0.** Settee, 5 ft. 6 ins. wide, with over 200 springs, **£17.** Supplied direct only. Carriage paid in U.K., with option of return at our expense in case of any disappointment on receipt. Write for Descriptive Booklet No. 18, with patterns of coverings, and learn all about this real easy chair. Please address in full:—

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If in London, please call (9 to 6.30; Sats. 9 to 1).

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Can be instantly raised, lowered, or inclined. It extends over bed, couch, or chair without touching it, and is the ideal Table for reading or taking meals in bed with ease and comfort. By pressing a button the top can be adjusted to various inclinations. It cannot overbalance. Comprises Bed Table, Reading Stand, Writing Table, Bed Rest, Card Table, etc. British made.

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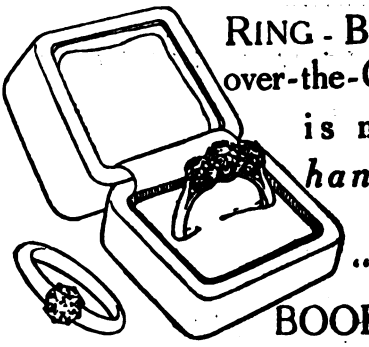

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SIMPLY press a button and the back declines or automatically rises to any position. Release the button and the back is locked. The sides open outwards, affording easy access and exit.
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It is in the form of concentrated mineral salts which, dissolved in plain water, produce an effervescent sparkling and refreshing curative drink. The strongest concentrate, the smallest dose, the most pleasant taste and 100% pure. The most economical to use.

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>
> (H. 439).

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>
> (S.C. 191).

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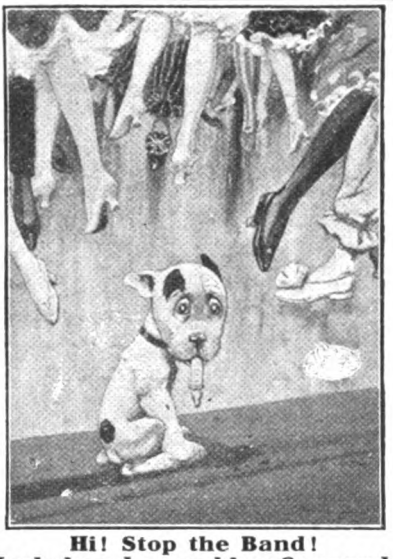

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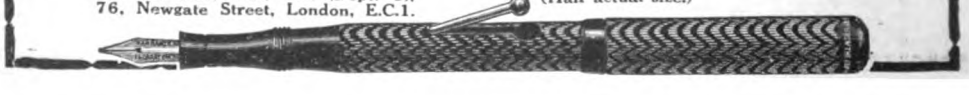

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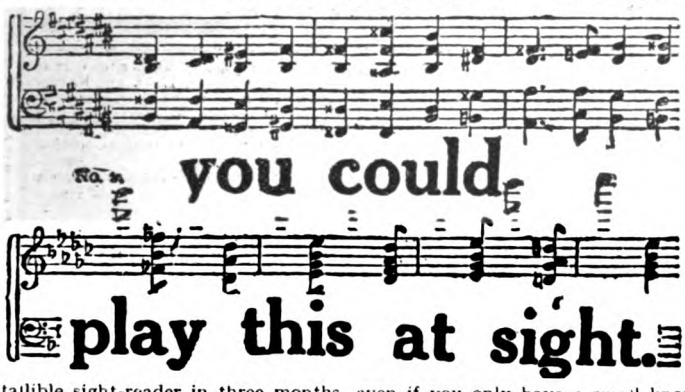

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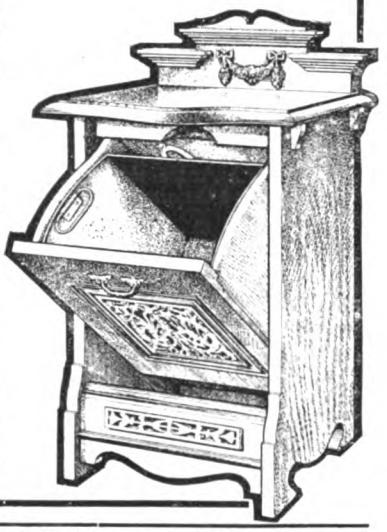

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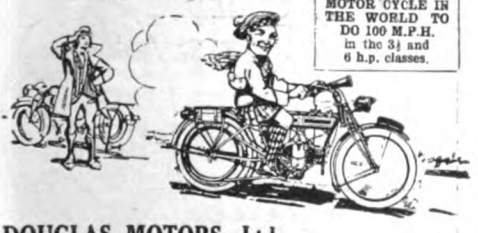

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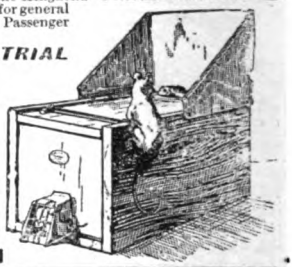

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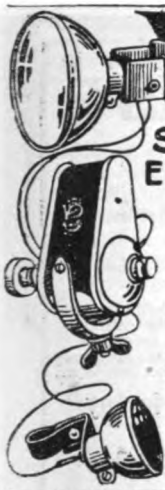

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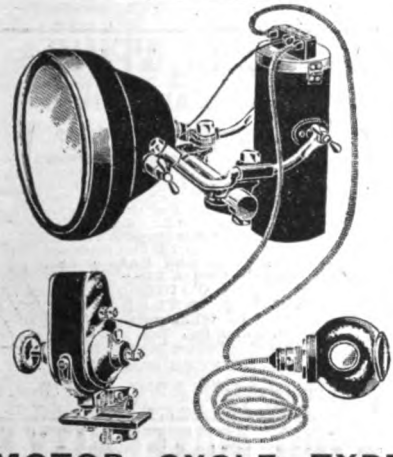

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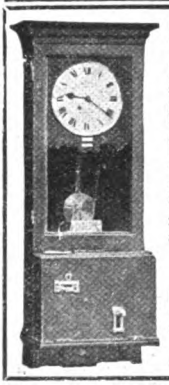

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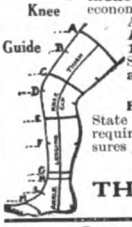

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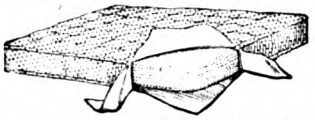

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For those who desire a more popular-priced underwear, the "Olympic" Brand has been introduced, which carries exactly the same guarantees regarding value and satisfaction as "Jason."

Jason Underwear Co., Leicester.

(P) 2

Surely the ideal way of keeping the hands clean, soft and white is to protect them BEFORE the dirt gets on to them. Just rub a little

Regd **Peldo** (Patent applied for) Price 1/6 SKIN CREAM

into your hands before starting your job; after you have finished cold water and soap will remove all the grime at once.

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London, E.1.

HEALTHY WOMEN

must wear "healthy" Corsets, and the "Natural Ease" Corset is the most healthy of all. Every wearer says so. While moulding the figure to the most delicate lines of feminine grace they vastly improve the health.

The CORSET of HEALTH

The Natural Ease Corset, Style 2.

8/11 pair. Post Free *Postage abroad extra.*

BACK TO PRE-WAR PRICES.

Complete with Special Detachable Suspenders. Stocked in all sizes from 20 to 30. Made in finest quality Drill.

SPECIAL POINTS of INTEREST. — No bones or steels to drag, hurt, or break. No lacing at the back. Made of strong, durable drill of finest quality, with special suspenders, detachable for washing purposes.

It is laced at the sides with elastic lacings to expand freely when breathing.

It is fitted with adjustable shoulder straps.

It has a short (9 in.) busk in front which ensures a perfect shape, and is fastened at the top and bottom with non-rusting Hooks and Eyes.

It can be easily washed at home, having nothing to rust or tarnish.

These Health Corsets are specially recommended for ladies who enjoy cycling, tennis, dancing, golf, &c., as there is nothing to hurt or break. Singers, Actresses and Invalids will find wonderful assistance, as they enable them to breathe with perfect freedom. They yield freely to every movement of the body, and whilst giving beauty of figure are the most comfortable Corsets ever worn. EVERY STITCH BRITISH. Support British women workers and reduce unemployment.

SEND FOR YOURS TO-DAY.

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GET RID OF YOUR FOOT TROUBLES

YOU have only to dissolve a small handful of Reudel Bath Saltrates in a hot foot bath and rest your feet in this for a few minutes. Then, Presto! Away go all your foot afflictions, almost as if by magic.

The *medicated* and *oxygenated* foot bath prepared by adding Reudel Bath Saltrates as explained above has a truly marvellous curative action upon all kinds of foot troubles, immediately relieving them, even in their worst forms. Every sensation of burning, chafing and bruising, all swelling, stiffness and inflammation, *any* sort of corn, callous, or other foot torture, will soon be only an unpleasant memory of the past.

Reudel Bath Saltrates is sold by all chemists everywhere, prices being only 2s. a half-pound and 3s. 3d. a pound. Satisfaction is guaranteed every user or money back immediately and without question.

What a well-known London Chiropodist writes :—

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GENTLEMEN,

During the past two years I have demonstrated the use of Reudel Bath Saltrates to over two thousand clients and recommended its use. I am very pleased to announce to you the high praise I am daily receiving of its beneficial results. It is comforting to use, Safe and Sure.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) ROBERT WORTLEY

Consulting Chiropodist.

Dr. W. H. MORSE, Hartford, Conn., U.S.A., writes :—

"Over and above all else that can be said in praise of the value of Pinelyptus Pastilles is their value in the treatment of soldiers who were gassed in the World's War."

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(Broncho-Laryngeal.)

Famous for Asthma, Catarrh, Cough, Chest, Throat, Voice.

RECOGNISED THE WORLD OVER AS INVALUABLE to Speakers, Teachers, Singers, Travellers, and all exposed to dusty occupation, vitiated atmosphere, or climatic changes.

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"Pinelyptus Pastilles are antiseptic to the bacteria which lodge and are harboured in the throat."

PROCTOR'S PINELYPTUS PASTILLES—a luxury after the theatre, dance, meeting, or sport to prevent chill.

Sold by Chemists and Stores, 1/3 per box.

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Why suffer?

You can get almost immediate relief with ZOX.

FREE.

TWO ZOX POWDERS FREE if you mention this magazine and enclose 1½d. stamped addressed envelope.

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FOR TRIAL 8D. BOTTLE.

SHADEINE tints Grey Hair any natural tint from BLONDE to BLACK, AUBURN or GOLDEN, is sold in all colours, is perfectly harmless, contains no lead, silver, mercury, etc. Copy of Medical certificate enclosed. Cannot produce unnatural tints. State colour required. **Trial bottle, 8d.,** per post 11d. ; **1/4,** post 1/8 ; **2/6,** post 2/11 ; **3/9,** post 4/6

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WEAK NERVES

ELECTRICITY THE NATURAL REMEDY

Weak Nerves lead to all sorts of functional disorders. Without a plentiful supply of Nerve Force the power of every organ to perform its function is diminished or impaired. Lacking Nerve Force,

—The blood travels slowly in its channels.
—It is imperfectly oxygenated.
—Food is undigested and not assimilated.
—Elimination of waste matter is insufficient.
—The blood becomes tainted with poisonous matter.
—There is in-nutrition or mal-nutrition.
—The brain is incapable of great or sustained effort.
—The whole tide of life in the body is low.

This book will be sent free without cost or obligation. It will show you how you can pass from ill-health to Health and Strength.

All the functions being imperfectly performed, there begins a state of anarchy in the body. The stomach rebels and there is Indigestion. The liver "strikes" and there is Sluggish Liver or Biliousness. The kidneys fail, and there are Uric Acid Disorders, including Rheumatism and Gout. Even the brain becomes affected, resulting in Insomnia, Brain Fag, and other Mental and Nervous Troubles.

ELECTRICITY RESTORES NERVE FORCE

It is not drugs nor medicine that can replace this deficiency of Nerve Force. These can only coerce or coax overworked and enfeebled organs into temporary functional activity. Electricity is the natural co-equivalent to human Nerve Force, and the success of the Pulvermacher Electrological Treatment is wholly due to the fact that it restores lost Nerve Force by the most scientific and successful method.

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You can wear the Pulvermacher Appliance to your business daily or even while asleep. Although powerfully electrical, they give no shock to the system, but gently and steadily pour a continuous and curative flow of electricity into all the nerve centres. The whole nervous system responds quickly and sympathetically, and immediately all the functions of the body begin to be performed healthfully, easily, and with their natural vigour.

Write for this "Guide to Health and Strength" to-day.

If your nerves are weak,
If your digestion is poor,
If your liver is sluggish,
If you are constipated,
If you have Rheumatism or Gout,
If you are easily tired and depressed,
If you lack confidence or will-power,

or if you are in any way "below par," "run-down," or ailing, you will find the secret of health in its pages.

Post to the Superintendent, Pulvermacher Electrological Institute, Ltd., 56 Vulcan House, 56, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.

Those who can do so are cordially invited to call, when Free Advice and Demonstrations will be given.

Drink and Degeneration.

FACILIS EST DESCENSUS AVERNI.

When a man finds his reliance on stimulants has so insidiously increased daily that existence seems impossible without recourse to them; when he is acutely conscious that he is suffering nervous and physical deterioration as a result, and yet has no power to fight against the intolerable craving that overwhelms him; when his judgment cries out against this immolation of his better self, and neither self-restraint nor pride have the power to deter, then, indeed, is he in sorry state, hating his weakness, yet unable to subdue it. Here, indeed, is tragedy! For soon he will lose even the smallest sense of self-criticism, divest himself of every vestige of self-respect, and degenerate into a helpless, hopeless condition—a misery to himself, a source of anguish to those near and dear to him, and a subject for contempt to his fellows.

ON THE VERGE.

He is as a man on the verge of a yawning abyss that waits to engulf him: he feels himself slipping, slipping, but has no power to prevent his progress to destruction. Yet succour is still possible if some strong hand is held out to him ere it is too late. And it is here that modern science throws him a life-line to draw him back to safety, and to restore him to the paths of normal self-respecting humanity once again. Let him not fail to grip it.

For many years thousands of all ranks of Society have been saved by availing themselves of the Turvey Treatment, which in a period of from three to five weeks permanently rids the victim of alcoholic excess, of his craving for stimulants, and entirely rehabilitates him in mind and body. Whether the drink habit is hereditary or acquired, the treatment, which may be taken at home and necessitates not the slightest interference with the patient's normal mode of life, is equally efficacious. Nor does it involve any exhausting effects as a consequence of abstention. The Turvey Treatment is one of the most beneficent of forces and has won the highest approval in the most exalted quarters, medical and philanthropic.

ADVICE FREELY GIVEN BY POST OR AT INTERVIEW.

If the form below is filled in and returned, full particulars will be forwarded post free. Those who can call are invited to do so any day between 10 and 5 (Saturday 10 till 1), when full information and advice on any case will be given. Particulars may also be obtained by telephone, "Mayfair 3406," or telegram, "Turvert, London."

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Confidential.
To the Medical Supt., T.T. Assn.,
2, Harewood Place,
Hanover Square, London, W 1
Telephone: Mayfair 3406

Please send me in plain envelope full particulars.

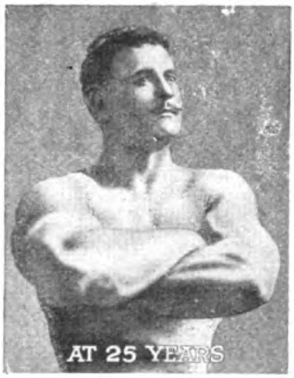
Name .....

Address .....

.....

A letter giving details of the case may accompany this inquiry. Treatment sent to any part of the world.
Strand Magazine, October, 1922.

CURING ILLNESS



These actual photographs, taken at an interval of 30 YEARS, demonstrate in EUGEN SANDOW'S OWN

WHY I CAN CURE YOU WHEN
By EUGEN
FACTS OF VITAL IMPORT MAN, WOMAN
MY OFFER

Are you seeking health? Ardently wishing to be well, but unable to throw off the trouble which has assailed the citadel of your well-being?

Perhaps your complaint is a condition of General Unfitness. It may be Dyspepsia, Chronic Indigestion. Even worse, perchance, your trouble is that awfully rampant scourge, Neurasthenia, the illness with 150 painful symptoms and disabilities.

Or, maybe, your thorn in the flesh is the Terror of Sleepless Nights—Insomnia; or the burden of too much flesh, Obesity; or one of the many forms of Chest Weakness; some Physical Deformity, such as Spinal Curvature, Heart Trouble, Rheumatism or Gout; or any other of the first signs of "past forty," which few people avoid when "anno domini" begins to take its toll.

Whichever of these, or other functional ailment is your scourge, I have good news for you and a valuable offer to make you.

I am able to offer you a sure way out—a way that will give you almost immediate relief and a way that before long will lead you right up and on to Perfect Health.

Please do not think that I claim any supernatural powers, or that I have any mysterious medicines or drugs to offer, nor do I tender you a faith cure, though of course faith is a valuable aid in any form of treatment of illness.

No; I am a simple missioner of Nature, and I show you how you can at small cost, in time or money, compel Nature to assert herself and overcome your trouble.

A common sense cure based upon sound natural laws is what I have to offer you—and the truth of what I tell you is vouched for by overwhelming outside confirmation, such as that afforded by the critical "Truth" investigation; the endorsement of some hundreds of the most distinguished medical men of our time; and thousands upon thousands of patients, from Kings to Labouring men, whom it has been my honour and pleasure to treat in the last 25 years, during which, at my Institute at 32, St. James' Street, London, and by correspondence to their own homes in every corner of the world, I have devoted myself to applying to others the method by which I developed myself from a weak, delicate child into such a condition of health and strength in manhood as won for me the fame of being the strongest man in the world.

How my system has preserved that health, strength and vigour you may judge for yourself by a glance at the photographs of myself at 25 and 55 years of age.

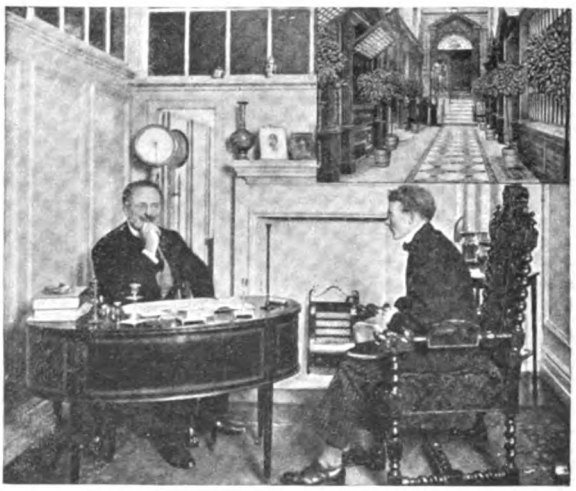
My Offer to You To-Day Wherever You Live.

If you are in search of similar perfect health and fitness I am prepared to personally study your case and advise you whether I consider my method will cure your trouble, without any cost to you or any obligation to follow my advice, unless you so decide.

If you do decide to take my treatment the cost is small, and only a few minutes a day of light, curative physical movements, specially prescribed by me for your own case, are required to carry out all that is necessary.

I attend daily at my Institute, 32, St. James' Street, London, S.W., and shall be pleased for you to call, when, at an interview, I can go thoroughly into your requirements.

For those who for any reason, such as residence at too great a distance, find a visit not convenient, I have prepared a Health Library of fifteen volumes dealing with my system of curing the most frequently met with ill-health conditions. Upon hearing particulars from you by letter, I will send you whichever volume of the Sandow Health Library deals with your need. I shall also write you a personal letter of advice based upon what you tell me of your condition.



I welcome any seeker after Health who calls upon me at my Institute, at 32, St. James' Street, London, S.W., any day between 11 and 1.30 or 3.30 and 5.30 (Saturdays 11 to 1), and will with pleasure consider and advise upon their cases without fee or obligation. Those who cannot call may write me fully and I will advise by letter to any place in the world. I have cured patients in the most remote parts.

Free Advice.

I am pleased to do this without fee or obligation, because I desire every sufferer, young or old (I have had patients of 80 and 90 years of age whom it has been my business to keep hale and hearty), to learn what is without doubt the most convenient and wonderful system of securing the most valuable of all human assets, Health.

I take great pride in drawing my readers' attention to the record of cases set forth in the next column.

WITHOUT MEDICINE

EVERY OTHER MEANS FAILS

SANDOW

TO EVERY OUT-OF-HEALTH AND CHILD, and

TO YOU!

which I honestly believe cannot be even distantly approached by any other method.

I am often asked the secret of this amazingly uniform success. It is twofold.

1. My method is the common-sense method of stirring up Nature to effect a natural, hence perfect, re-establishment of health.
2. I never accept a case for treatment at the Sandow Institute, or by correspondence in the patient's own home, unless I am confident from ample past experience that it is one in which my method cannot fail to benefit.

That is why I can cure you when all other means fail.

Eugen Sandow

PROOF that I have cured 94 out of every 100 cases, and benefited 99 out of every 100 cases treated.

"TRUTH'S" HISTORIC CERTIFICATE

Following on the now famous pronouncement of *Truth* :—

"We find that the Sandow Treatment has completely achieved the object for which it was undertaken in no fewer than 94 per cent. of cases, and satisfactory improvement was produced in over 99 per cent. of cases."

—the Editor has written the following letter to Mr. Sandow:—

"*October 14th*, 1921.

"In view of former recommendations in *Truth* of your system of physical exercises, I have acceded to your request that my representative should verify more recent statements of patients, of which you propose to make use. I have now the pleasure of informing you that we are perfectly satisfied of the genuineness and significance of these testimonials."

JUBILEE OF THE WORLD-FAMOUS SANDOW CURATIVE INSTITUTE.

AN ASTOUNDING AND PHENOMENAL RECORD IN THE CURE OF ILLNESS BY NATURAL MEANS.

Over 200,000 Successfully Treated Cases !

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40,000 Cases of Indigestion.
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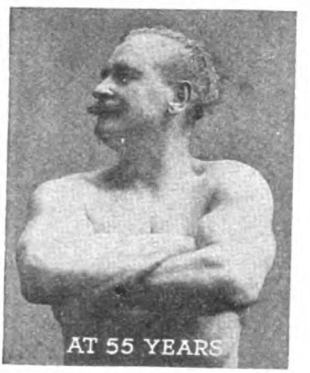
20,000 Cases of Liver Trouble.
12,000 Cases of Obesity.
7,000 Cases of Heart Trouble.
5,000 Cases of Lung and Chest Complaints.
5,000 Cases of Rheumatism and Gout.
4,000 Cases of Anæmia.
7,000 Cases of Lack of Vigour.
6,000 Cases of Insomnia.
4,000 Cases of Spinal Curvature and other Physical Defects.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENERAL FITNESS.

Tens of Thousands of Men and Women made physically Fit and Strong, to carry on their occupations, as well as many thousands of delicate and ill-developed boys and girls made perfectly healthy and strong.

Can any other Individual, Institution or Method even approach this CERTIFIED RECORD ?



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If you suffer from any of the conditions described in the following volumes of the SANDOW HEALTH LIBRARY, I invite you to call or write for a FREE COPY today of the book on your own trouble.

It costs you nothing, but will prove a stepping-stone to PERFECT HEALTH FOR YOU.

SANDOW'S HEALTH LIBRARY.

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Constipation.
Liver Trouble.
Neurasthenia.
Obesity.
Insomnia.
Heart Affections.
Lung and Chest Complaints.
Rheumatism.
Anæmia.
Lack of Vigour.
Physical Deformities in Men.
Physical Deformities in Women.
Physical Development and Figure Culture.
Boys' and Girls' Health and Ailments.

In the matter of health there is no time like the present, so SEND AT ONCE for the FREE BOOK ON YOUR COMPLAINT.

Private and Confidential.

Please send me, Free and Post Paid, your book on .....

My occupation is .....Age.....

NAME (Mr., Mrs., Miss, or title) .....

Address .....

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To

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If you prefer not to cut Magazine, a letter mentioning my offer to "Strand Magazine" readers will do as well.

There is an irresistible attraction about Wright's Coal Tar Soap that will always make it The Nursery Soap

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PROTECTS FROM INFECTION

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7d per Tablet Box of 3, 1/9
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BENGER'S Food for INFANTS, INVALIDS & the AGED.

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Sold in tins by all Chemists. Prices: 1/4; 2/3; 4/-; 8/6

John Elkan

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SPLENDID TIMEKEEPER.

Guaranteed for all Climates, Solid Silver Cases, Screw Bezel, **Damp and Dust Proof,** Superior Lever Movement. Fully Jewelled, With radium dial, 10/6 extra. *Post Free.*

Flying Officer writes:—"It is the only watch I have yet had which never loses or gains." An Ideal Gift.

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Always the Right Time.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Contents for October, 1922.

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Frontispiece: The Ancient Mariner was ushered into my presence. "Granpa's in bed with one of his legs again," she announced.

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE is printed by the Newnes and Pearson Printing Co., Ltd., N. Kensington, and published monthly by the Proprietors, George Newnes, Ltd., 8 to 11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, England. Subscription price to any part of the world post free, for one year, 15s. (Canada, 14s.). Registered at the General Post Office for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Entered as Second-class Matter at the New York, N.Y., Post Office. Cases for binding volumes of THE STRAND MAGAZINE may be obtained to order from Booksellers for 3s., or post free for 3s. 4d. direct from the Office. Half-yearly Volumes, 7s. 6d. net.

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The Index to Volume 63 can be obtained on application to the Publisher.

Most of the Original Drawings of the Illustrations in this Magazine are for sale. Terms may be had on application to the Cliché Department, George Newnes, Ltd., 8-11, Southampton Street, Strand, W.C.

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Honorary Committee:—LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU, LORD FORSTER OF LEPE, and the REV. R. J. CAMPBELL, M.A.

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To face back of Frontispiece.

THE
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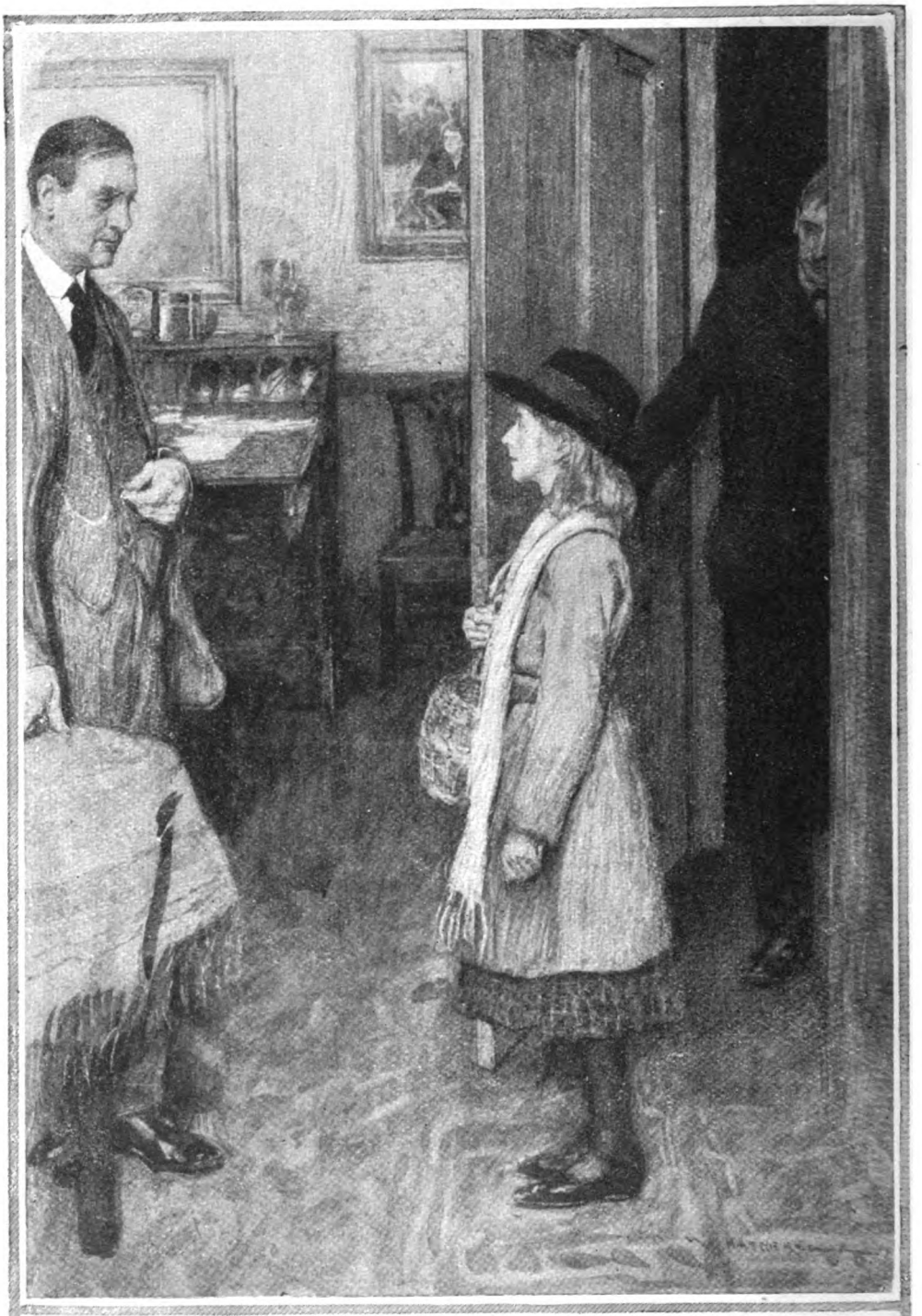
MAGAZINE
October, 1922.



The Ancient Mariner was ushered into my presence.
"Granpa's in bed with one of his legs again," she announced.

"THE LIBERRY"

by

IAN HAY

ILLUSTRATED BY W. HATHERELL, R.I.

I.

I FIRST met Mr. Baxter at the fourpenny box outside Mr. Timpenny's second-hand bookshop in High Street, and was attracted at once by the loving care with which he handled its contents. Dirty and dog-eared as most of them were, he never snatched one up or threw it down, after the common fashion of patrons of inexpensive literature, but would gently extract a more than usually disreputable volume from its heap, blow the dust off, straighten the warped cover, and smooth out the wrinkled pages before dipping into the subject-matter. In fact, the last operation struck me as interesting him least of all.

Becoming aware of my presence, he moved aside with a courtly little bow. He was a dusty old gentleman, in a very shabby frock-coat. He looked as if he lived in the fourpenny box himself.

"Am I preventing you from selecting a volume, sir?" he inquired.

I hastened to reassure him. I had no special designs on the fourpenny box, or indeed on any. I was merely idling.

"I am waiting for the druggist to make up a prescription," I said.

"Then you don't do your own dispensing, sir?"

"As a rule, yes. I have run out of this particular drug, though. But you know me?"

"Yes, sir, by sight. We do not take long in Broxborough to get to know everyone by sight. You succeeded to Dr. Wiseman's practice, I think?"

"Yes."

"A good old man, sir, and a lover of books, like myself."

"You're right about yourself," I said. "You handle a book as I would a delicate patient."

"A very apt comparison, sir. To me, in a manner of speaking, a book is a human thing. A dilapidated book *is* a patient; I like to repair its broken back and gum in its loose pages. In fact, the late Archdeacon used to rally me upon the subject, sir. He insisted that I cared more for a book as a book than for what was inside it."

I ventured, with immediate success, to draw him out upon the subject of the late Archdeacon.

"Archdeacon Belford, sir. He died many years ago, and few remember him now. A great scholar and gentleman. I was associated with him almost continuously in my younger days. It was he who assisted me to found my library."

"Your library?"

"Yes, sir." The old gentleman's mild blue eyes suddenly glowed with pride. "Nothing very pretentious, of course; but I take my little pleasure in it. And it grows—it grows." He picked a small tattered volume out of the box—it looked like an ancient school prize—and turned down a few dogs' ears with a distressed expression.

"A sweet little edition," he said, examining the text, "but small print. I have left my glasses at home. Would you very kindly indicate to me the nature of its contents, sir?"

I read a few lines aloud to him—poetry.

"I don't know it," I confessed. "Poetry is not much in my line. Let me look at the title-page. Ah!—Robert Southey."

"I rather thought it was Southey," said Mr. Baxter immediately.

"I fancy you are more widely read than I am," I remarked.

"I make a point of reading aloud a passage out of one of my books every day, sir. I acquired the habit under the late Archdeacon. We read together constantly. He had very definite views on the value of reading. 'A man with books about him,' he used to say, 'is a man surrounded by friends far more interesting and distinguished than any he is likely to meet when he dines with the Bishop. A man with a library of his own, however small, is at once a capitalist who can never go bankrupt and an aristocrat who moves in circles to which the common herd cannot penetrate. In other words, a man with a library is a man respected!' That was why I founded my own, sir. The Archdeacon himself contributed the first few volumes."

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"Is it a large library?" I asked, glancing furtively at my wrist-watch.

"No, sir; of very modest dimensions. But it is sufficiently large to be utilized by nearly all my friends."

"You lend them books, then?"

"Oh, no, sir. I would not do that. My books are everything to me—and you know what book-borrowers are! My friends are welcome to tap my literary resources, but it must be through me as medium."

"I don't quite understand," I said.

"When a seeker after knowledge calls upon me," explained the indefatigable Mr. Baxter, "I select from my library the appropriate volume and read, or recite, to him such passages as appear to me most applicable to his case. In this way I ensure the safety and cleanliness of my literary property——"

"So here you are! I thought so. Have you been buying another of those dirty things?"

A small, alert, slightly shrewish girl of about fifteen had suddenly appeared from nowhere, and was now transfixing my flinching companion with the eye of the Ancient Mariner.

"Only fourpence, my dear," replied Mr. Baxter, deferentially.

"That's right. Throw money about!" said the young lady. "Have you *got* fourpence?" she added, with a slight softening of manner.

"Well, to be exact, I rather think all I have at the moment is threepence."

The Ancient Mariner produced a penny.

"Here you are," she said, handing him the coin with a not altogether successful attempt at an indulgent smile. "You haven't bought anything for a fortnight. Go in and pay for it, and then come home to dinner, do!"

"Good morning, Mr. Baxter. How's the library this morning?"

The druggist was standing in his doorway, with a facetious twinkle in his eye. Evidently Mr. Baxter's library was an accepted target for local humour.

Mr. Baxter took no notice, but disappeared into the bookshop. Mr. Pettigrew handed me my bottle.

"One of our characters, that old fellow," he said, with that little air of civic pride which marks the country-townsman booming local stock. "Quite a poor man; but possesses an extensive library—*quite* extensive. His learning is at the service of his fellow-citizens. He likes to be called The Oracle. Supposing you want to know something about Shakespeare, or Julius Cæsar, or wireless telegraphy, or Patagonia—you go to Baxter. You press the button and he does the rest! Lives a bit in the clouds, of course; and I wouldn't go so far as to say that his information is always infallible. In fact"—Mr. Pettigrew tapped his forehead significantly—"his upper storey——"

"Who made up a wrong prescription and poisoned a baby?" demanded an acid voice, immediately under the humorist's left elbow. He swung round. The small girl, crimson with wrath but with her emotions well under control, stood gazing dispassionately before her, apparently talking to herself.

"Whose wife gave a party," she continued—"and nobody came? Whose daughter wants to marry the curate—and he won't? Who——"

"That'll do," announced Mr. Pettigrew, shortly, and retired in disorder into his shop. Simultaneously The Oracle emerged from the bookshop with Robert Southey under his arm, and with a stately inclination in my direction departed down the street, under the grim and defiant escort of his infant guardian.

II.

ONE morning about three months later my butler, footman, *valet de chambre*, chauffeur, and general supervisor, McAndrew, thrust his head round the dining-room door as I sat at breakfast and announced:—

"There a wee body in the hall."

"Man or woman?" I asked.

"A lassie."

"A patient?"

"I couldna say; she wouldna tell me," replied McAndrew, not without bitterness.

"Bring her in," I said. Forthwith the Ancient Mariner was ushered into my presence.

"Granpa's in bed with one of his legs again," she announced.

I forbore to ask an obvious and fatuous question, and nodded.

"Dr. Wiseman used to attend him," continued my visitor; "but he didn't charge him very much—next to nothink, almost," she added, with a shade of anxiety.

"Is your grandfather insured, or on any club?" I asked. "If so, the panel doctor——"

"No, he isn't insured, or anything. He's a gentleman. He has a liberry."

Toujours the "Liberry"! "Where does he live?" I inquired.

"Twenty-one, The Common. When can you come?"

"Eleven o'clock."

"All right. Don't be earlier than that; I have the room to straighten."

The home of The Oracle proved to be one of a row—something between a villa and a cottage. The door was opened by my sharp-featured little friend.

"Walk in," she said—"and wipe your boots."

Mr. Baxter was in bed in the front parlour. As I had suspected, he had both legs with him—but one of these was inflamed and swollen.

"I always bring him in here when he's poorly," explained the granddaughter (whose name I discovered later to be Ada Weeks), "because he likes to be with his old books." She favoured her patient with an affectionate glare. "He's half silly about them."

I ATTENDED to the invalid's immediate wants, and then overhauled him generally. He was not what an insurance agent would have termed "a good life." After that I was introduced to the library, which occupied the wall opposite to the bed. It consisted of a couple of mahogany bookcases, of solid Victorian workmanship, with locked glass doors lined with faded green silk. Ada Weeks produced a key from under her grandfather's pillow and unlocked one of the doors, revealing the books. They were all neatly covered in brown paper. There were no titles on the backs, but each book bore a number in sprawling, irregular figures.

"There, sir!" announced my patient, with simple pride. "There you behold the accumulated wealth of a man who is just as wealthy as he wishes to be!"

"Rats!" remarked a sharp voice from the recesses of the library; but the old gentleman appeared not to hear.

"It dates from the lamented death of the late Archdeacon. There are a hundred and seventy-nine volumes in all. The little Southey is the last arrival. Show it to us, Ada."

Miss Weeks extracted volume one hundred and seventy-nine from the lowest shelf and handed it to the old man. He turned over the pages lovingly.

"Here is the passage which made us acquainted, sir," he said. "A delightful thing." He produced spectacles from somewhere in the bed, adjusted them, and read:—

"My days among the Dead are passed:
Around me I behold
(Where'er these casual eyes are cast)
The mighty minds of old:
My never-failing friends are they,
With whom—with whom——"

He faltered.

"'*With whom I converse day by day,*'" said Ada Weeks, in a matter-of-fact voice. "Don't strain your eyes."

"You are right, my dear," admitted Mr. Baxter, laying down the book. "The type is somewhat small. But this little poem is strangely suggestive of my own condition. It is called 'The Scholar'—just about an old man living in the past among his books. I have read it to myself many a time since last I saw you, sir. Put it back, Ada; and show the doctor an older friend. Something out of the late Archdeacon's library—say, number fourteen."

Miss Ada pulled down the volume indicated, blew viciously upon the top edges, and handed it to me. It proved to be part of an almost obsolete encyclopædia.

"A useful little compendium of knowledge," was Mr. Baxter's comment. "Unfortunately, I have not the set complete—only eight volumes. They go as far as 'Pocohontas.' There are four more really."

"'Prairie oyster' to 'Zymotic,'" confirmed the ever-ready Miss Weeks.

"Precisely. You would be surprised at the number of my callers who desire information on matters that come between 'Prairie oyster' and 'Zymotic'!" The old gentleman sighed. "But where their requirements are limited to the earlier letters of the alphabet, I can usually find a passage which both interests and enlightens them." He glanced at the number on the back of the book. "This is the first volume of the set: 'A—Byzantium.' Many a hungry soul have I fed from it." He turned over the pages. "'Addison—Algebra—Archæology—Adenoids.' That reminds me, a neighbour is coming in to consult me about adenoids this afternoon. A mother—a woman in quite humble circumstances. I must look up adenoids."

"Isn't that rather trespassing on my department?" I asked.

"Oh, dear, no, sir. All I shall do will be to find the passage relating to adenoids, and read it aloud to Mrs. Caddick."

"Mrs. Caddick? I am treating a child of hers for adenoids at present."

"Quite so, sir. And Mrs. Caddick naturally wishes to know what they are. I shall read aloud to her the scientific definition of the ailment. It is surprising what a comfort that will be to her. Poor soul, she's almost illiterate; and the printed word is a sacred mystery to such!"

"You are an authority on human nature, Mr. Baxter, I perceive."

"You are kind to say so, sir. But I was a mere disciple of the late Archdeacon. It's a strange thing, human nature," he continued, pensively. "I have studied it all my life. My recreation is to help it—and it needs all the help it can get. I am at home every evening, and folk look in quite regularly to ask for my guidance on some literary, historical, or scientific point of interest. 'Consulting The Oracle,' they are kind enough to call it. Such visits enable me to gratify at once my hobby and my vanity!" He smiled.

"You have one or two bulky-looking volumes up there," I said, approaching the bookcase and inspecting the top shelf. "Who is this big fellow—number eighty-seven?"

I half raised my hand; but in a flash Ada Weeks was before me.

"It's Shakespeare," she announced, snatching the volume down and holding it to her flat little bosom. 'Presentation!"

"Ada is always a little jealous about letting the presentation volumes out of her hands," explained Mr. Baxter, from the bed. "That book was conferred upon me as a small token of esteem by a certain literary circle in London in which I was interested before I came here, many years ago. Bring it to me, my dear."

Ada Weeks, with a sidelong and defiant glance in my direction, handed the great book to the old man. He opened it at random, and began to read aloud:—

"*This fortress built by Nature for herself*
Against infection and the hand of war;
This happy breed of men, this little world;
This precious stone set in a silver sea;
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this
England!"

He broke off, and smiled.

"You see I do not need glasses," he said, "for such a passage as that! I almost know it by heart, although I never possessed the Archdeacon's astonishing facility in that direction. He was accustomed to commit a passage to memory every day. Put it back, Ada dear."

Miss Weeks restored the volume to the case, closed the door, turned the key, and faced me with the air of a small but determined hen which has safely shut her chickens into the coop in the very face of an ill-disposed but inexperienced young fox. I took up my hat.

"Good-bye, Mr. Baxter," I said. "I shall come and see you to-morrow. Don't let your disciples overtire you."

The old man flushed.

"I thank you for that flattering word, sir," he said.

Half-way down the street I realized that I had forgotten my stethoscope. Accordingly I retraced my steps.

I found the front door open. I might have walked in without ceremony; but, inspired by a very proper fear of Miss Ada Weeks, I tapped respectfully and waited. There was no response. Presently I became aware of voices proceeding from the front parlour—the door of which stood wide open—just inside the passage. This is what I heard:—

"'Adenitis' and 'Adenoid growths'—that's the nearest I can find. Which do you want?"

"I think adenoid growths, my dear. Read it through once, as usual; then again line by line."

"All right. Pay attention, mind!" said Miss Weeks, sharply, and began:—

"'Adenoid growths of the lym—lymphatic tissues of the upper throat occur chiefly in children from four to fourteen.' Yes, that's right: Johnny Caddick is eight. 'The child breathes through the mouth'—Where do they expect h m to breathe through? His ear?—'suffers from nasal cat'—cat something; we'll call it cater—'from nasal cater.' I wonder how people can write such words, let alone read them!"

"To me," said the gentle voice of the old man, "it seems wonderful that they should be able to do either."

"Listen again," commanded Miss Weeks, oblivious of a resounding knock from me.

"'Nasal cater and slight deafness, and is stupid and sluggish.' This book takes off Johnny Caddick to the life, and no mistake! I wonder what his mother will say? 'With a cha-rac-ter-is-tic'—oh, crumbs!—'facial expression. Cure is effected by a simple operation of removal.' Does that mean his face? A good job if it does! That's all. Now I'll learn you it. 'Adenoid growths——'"

"Adenoid growths, adenoid growths, adenoid growths——"

"'Of the lymphatic tissues——'"

"Of the lymphatic tissues——"

I recollected that I had a spare stethoscope at home, and tiptoed down the steps.

III.

I LEARNED a good deal about the Baxter *ménage* during the next few weeks, from various sources.

First the rector, whom I encountered one day paying a parochial call at Twenty-one, The Common. We walked home together.

"He's a strange old fellow," said my companion, "and most of his characteristics are derived from imitation, conscious or unconscious, of a stranger old fellow still."

"The late lamented?"

"Exactly. Old Belford was a bachelor, and lived alone among his books in his house in the Close for nearly forty years."

"What was Baxter's exact status in the household?"

"By his own account, he was the old man's confidential secretary, amanuensis, and librarian. My own belief is that he cleaned the archidiaconal boots. Of course, he may have been allowed to dust the books in the library too. Anyhow, during his period of service in that household he contrived to amass an enormous quantity of more or less useless book-learning. He is regarded hereabouts as quite a *savant*. His erudition makes him respected by those who have

none, and his library of miscellaneous rubbish gives him the status of a man of property."

"It's not all rubbish. He has a Shakespeare and a Southey, at least. He has Jowett's Thucydides, too, he tells me."

"You're right; I retract that part. But his library is rubbish, in the sense that it's an unclassified rag-bag of odds and ends. Still, he's an enlightened old chap in his way. When he settled down in that little house after old Belford's death, and began to set up as a sort of provincial Socrates, his conversation and library were mainly classical, as you might expect, considering their origin. He would pull down a Homer, or an Herodotus, or a Virgil, and spout to his audience some favourite passage of his late employer."

"You mean to say he translated from the original Latin and Greek?"

"Ah! that's what nobody knows. The peculiar thing about Baxter is that, though he will read or quote from any book in his library for your delectation, he practically never permits anyone to take the book out of his hands. No human eye, for instance, has ever fallen upon the printed pages of Baxter's Homer. If it did, I suspect it would find that page printed in good plain English. Pope's translation, probably."

"You think he is a fraud, then?"

"Oh, bless you, no! I think he is a genuine book-lover, and values—in fact, lives on—the respect which his literary eminence earns for him in this extremely unliterary township. But candidly I think most of his

He was a dusty old gentleman who looked as if he lived in the fourpenny box himself.

classical works are common cribs. I have known less pardonable forms of hypocrisy. But I was saying just now he was enlightened. Of late years he has supplemented his Latin and Greek and his poets and historians by scientific and technical literature. People go and consult him about all sorts of modern developments and tendencies now. Well, I turn off here. Good afternoon."

Secondly, from McAndrew.

"By the way, when did Mr. Baxter's granddaughter appear on the scene?" I inquired of him one day.

"That was a long after the old man died. He left Baxter an annuity, with two bookcases and a wheen books to start a library of his ain. Mistress Corby's dochter says he left him fufty, and Baxter pinched the other twenty-five. That was the nucleus, you'll understand. The rest he has been collecting for himself for many a year."

"And the granddaughter?" I inquired, gently.

"Oh, aye; I was coming to her. She came along aboot five years ago, long after the old man had settled into yon wee hoose where he stays now. She just appeared. Naebody could ever find oot where from. Baxter is as close as an oyster, and as for the lassie"—McAndrew shuddered slightly—"she has an ill tongue tae provoke."

Thirdly, *chez* Baxter.

As already indicated, it was the old gentleman's custom of an evening to receive visitors in the front room and discourse to them on literature, poetry, history, and science. Light refreshments—very light refreshments—were handed round by Miss Weeks; but these were a mere appendage to the literary provender supplied. I formed the habit of joining this symposium upon one evening every week.

His disciples were a motley crew. There were socially ambitious young shop-assistants, anxious to acquire a literary polish likely to impress the opposite sex. There were artisans who wished to advance themselves in the technique of their profession. There were heavy-handed, heavy-shouldered, rather wistful men, with muscles made lusty by hard physical labour, conscious of minds grown puny and attenuated for lack of intellectual nourishment. There were humble folk with genuine literary leanings, who came to consult Mr. Baxter's poems and essays, and sometimes shyly proffered compositions of their own for perusal and comment. There were men—uneducated men—dimly conscious of the fact that they possessed immortal souls, who had waded into the deep waters of theological speculation, and got out of their depth. For each and all Mr. Baxter had a word of welcome and counsel.

"I am very happy to see you, Mr. Wright. And your friend, Mr. ——? Mr. Dennis. Thank you. We are going to read and discuss a passage from 'The Tempest' presently. Shakespeare, you know. Be seated, and my granddaughter will offer you a little refreshment. I have been consulting various authorities on statical electricity for you, Mr. Armitage. I have marked a few passages in my Encyclopædia, volume twenty, in my library, which seem to me to treat the subject most lucidly. You might also derive some information from the life of Mr. Faraday—volume eighteen. My granddaughter will look up the passage for you presently. . . Ah, Mr. Jobson! How are they down at the factory to-day? You are just in time. We are about to read and discuss a passage from 'The Tempest.' Shakespeare, of course. Be seated, pray. Now, friends, 'The Tempest'!"

After that the presentation Shakespeare would be opened, and Mr. Baxter would declaim selected passages. A discussion would follow—a quite naive and rather pathetic discussion, sometimes. Ultimately Mr. Baxter would sum up, generally with extracts from other Shakespearean passages, which he turned up with great readiness and dexterity, rolling them from off his tongue with obvious relish.

Finally, at a moment selected by herself, the vigilant Ada Weeks would terminate the proceedings with the curt announcement that her grandfather was tired. The precious volumes were locked in the library again, and we were bidden, without ceremony, to say good night to our host and not to bang the street door.

IV.

POSSIBLY it may have occurred to the reader to wonder whether in a community at once so erudite and progressive as Broxborough—it possesses both a Cathedral Close and a linoleum factory—there can have been no official alternative to Twenty-one, The Common—no public library, no public lecture courses, no municipal oracle, as it were.

In truth Broxborough once had all these things. Before the War there existed an institution known as Broxborough Pantheon. Here was an excellent library of reference; lectures and classes, too, were constantly in operation throughout the winter months. But the entire building had been destroyed by fire in nineteen-fifteen, and had never been rebuilt.

But one day a man from Pittsburg, who had been born in Broxborough nearly forty years previously, returned, rugged, prosperous, and beneficently sentimental, to revisit the haunts of his youth.

Naturally he found the place profoundly changed. The Cathedral organ-bellows were now inflated by a gas-engine, and the nine-seventeen up train did not start until nine-forty-two. And—where the Broxborough Pantheon had once reared its stucco pseudo-Doric *façade* upon the market-square, there was nothing but an untidy hoarding masking a heap of charred *débris* and labelled, "*Site of proposed new premises of the Broxborough Pantheon.*"

JOHN CRAKE of Pittsburg made inquiries, and the truth was revealed. The old Pantheon had ceased to exist for nearly five years, and the new Pantheon, in the present condition of the ratepayers' pockets, seemed unlikely ever to exist at all. So John Crake, having pondered the matter in his large and sentimental heart, put his hand into his own capacious pocket, and lo! the new Pantheon arose.

The building was now ready for occupation, and the exact procedure at the opening ceremony was becoming a matter of acute recrimination at the Council meetings.

"Things are more or less arranged," said that genial gossip, the rector, "so far as our city fathers are capable of arranging anything. The place is to be called Crake Hall, which I think is right, and Crake himself is coming over from America for the opening, which I call sporting of him. Old Broxey" (The Most Noble the Marquess of Broxborough, the Lord Lieutenant of our county) "will perform the opening ceremony. That is to say, he will advance up the steps in the presence of the multitude and knock three times upon the closed doors of the Hall. A solemn pause will follow, to work up the excitement. Then the donor, who will be standing inside, wearing a top-hat for the first time in his life——"

"Rector, I have frequently warned you that your ribald tongue will some day lose you your job."

"Never mind that. It's a poor heart that never rejoices, and I am too fat to be serious all the time, anyhow. Well, after the appointed interval of silence Crake will open a kind of peep-hole in the oaken door, and say: 'Who goes there?' or something of that kind. Broxey, if he is still awake, will reply: 'The citizens of this ancient borough,' or words to that effect. Then the doors will be thrown open—assuming that they *will* open; but you know what our local contractors are—and Crake will be revealed in his top-hat, and will say: 'Welcome, stranger!' or 'Walk right in, boys!' or 'Watch your step!' or something like that, and will hand the key of the Institute to Broxey, who will probably lose it."

"I see. And then to lunch at the Town Hall, I suppose?"

"Not so fast. Remember this is a Cathedral city; the Dean and Chapter must be given an opportunity to put their oar in. The Dean will now speak his piece, after which I understand that the choir, who are to be concealed somewhere behind one of the doors, will create a brief disturbance. After that the town will assert itself, against the county and the Close."

"What is their stunt going to be?"

"An address of welcome and grateful thanks to Crake."

"That seems reasonable. But who is going to compose it?"

"I have already done so, by request. It is not half bad," said the rector, modestly.

"Who is going to read it? The Mayor?"

"The Mayor is an imperfect creature, but he possesses one superlative quality; he harbours no illusions about his own ability to grapple with the letter H. He declines to read the address. Most of the Corporation are in the same boat—though they don't all admit it."

"Why don't you read it yourself?"

"Trade union rules forbid. If I read it it would be regarded as the propaganda of the Established Church. The forces of town and chapel would combine to fall upon me and crush me. No, we must have a citizen—a citizen of credit and renown, locally known and esteemed." The rector eyed me furtively. "I suppose *you*, now——"

"Not on your life!" I replied, hastily.

"Why not?"

"Well, for one thing, I am a comparative stranger; I haven't been here two years yet. Besides, in opening a literary and intellectual emporium of this kind you want—I have it! The very man!"

"Who?" asked the rector, eagerly.

I told him.

The rector halted in the middle of the street and shook me by the hand.

"Ideal!" he said. "I'll fix it with the Council. You go and ask *him*"

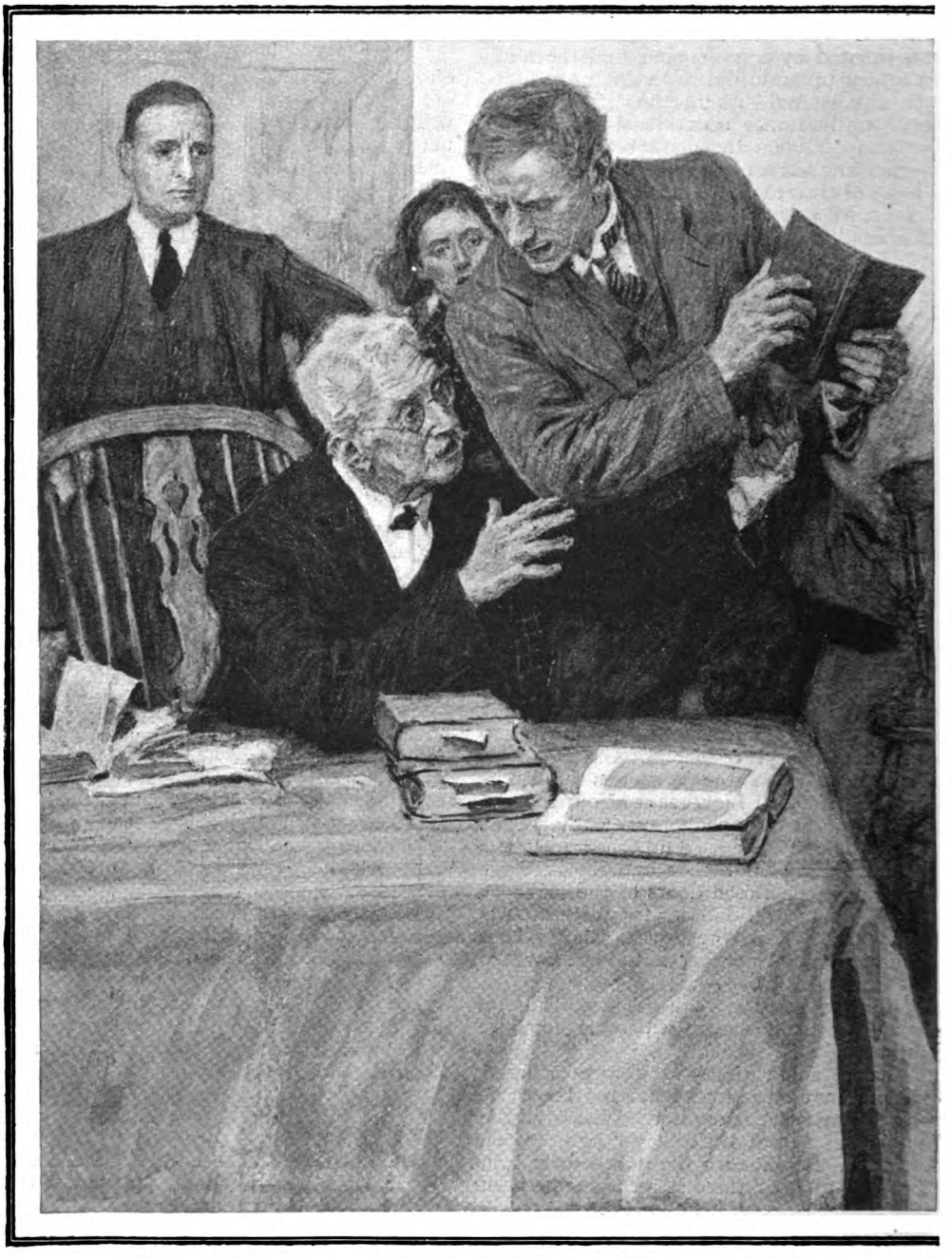
V.

I REPAIRED to the home of The Oracle that same evening. It was destined to be a memorable visit.

Something unusual in the atmosphere impressed itself on my senses the moment Ada Weeks opened the door to me.

"Pettigrew and Mould is here," she said. "Hang up your own hat; I can't leave them." And she vanished into the front room.

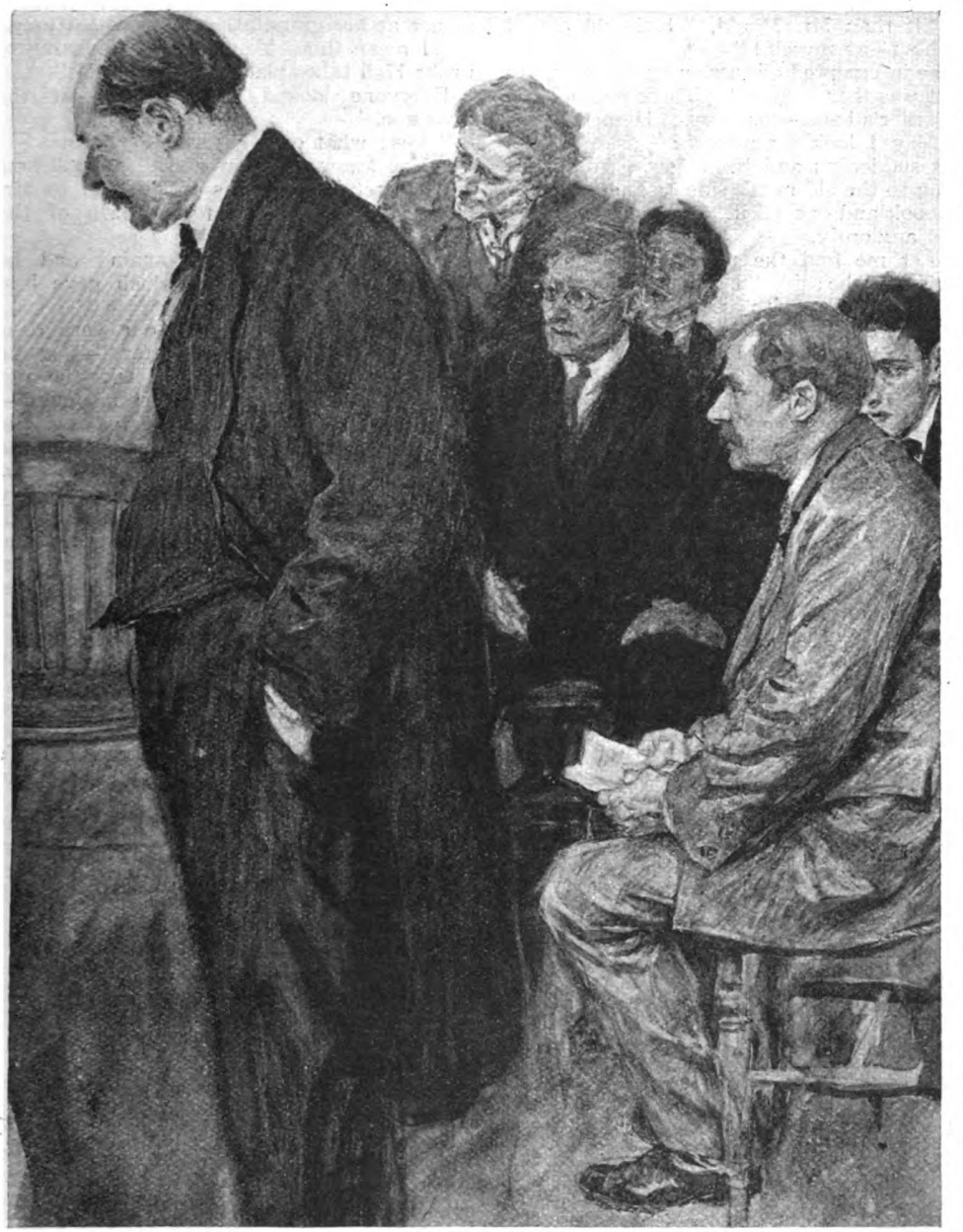
Messrs. Pettigrew and Mould were a sore trial to Mr. Baxter. They did not consult The Oracle regularly, but when they did they made trouble. Their efforts appeared mainly



"May I look for myself?" asked Pettigrew suddenly; and before even Ada Baxter put out his

to be directed towards embarrassing their host by asking frivolous questions, and then humiliating him in the presence of his disciples by the manner in which they received his answers.

When I entered the parlour these two worthies were heavily engaged in their favourite sport of philosopher-baiting. The philosopher himself, I noticed, was looking very old and very tired. I had not seen him



could spring to the old man's side he had snatched the book and opened it.
hand anxiously.

for a week, and I was secretly shocked at his appearance.

"You're not looking well," I said, as I shook hands. "You ought not to be entertaining your friends to-night."

"Indeed," replied my host, with the ghost of a smile, "my friends have been entertaining me. Mr. Mould has been amusing us all. Has he not, Ada?"

"If I was his wife," replied Miss Weeks,

with a glare which would have permanently disheartened any comedian less sure of himself than Mr. Mould, "I should die of laughing—at myself!"

The interrupted discussion on some knotty point was then resumed. There was a book in Baxter's hand—his copy of Homer.

"May I look for myself?" asked Pettigrew suddenly; and before even Ada could spring to the old man's side he had snatched the book and opened it. Baxter put out his hand anxiously.

"Let me find the passage for you, Mr. Pettigrew," he said. "I do not know whether you are familiar with ancient Greek——"

"No," said Mr. Pettigrew, grimly, looking up from the book, "I am not. But I *am* familiar with modern German. This book is printed in German!"

"The marginal comments are in German, of course," said the old man, quickly. "The thoroughness of German research is proverbial. Give me back the book, pray." I noticed he was breathing very shortly.

Ada Weeks settled the question by wrenching the volume out of Pettigrew's hand and locking it into The Liberry.

"You can go!" she announced. "We only entertain gentlemen here."

PETTIGREW took up his hat; Mould rose and did likewise. The rest of the company fidgeted uncomfortably in their seats. It was a particularly unpleasant moment.

"Good night, Mr. Baxter," said Pettigrew, moving towards the door, which Miss Weeks was obligingly holding wide open for him. "Sometimes I wonder," he sniggered, turning again, "whether you are quite as ripe a scholar as you would have some of the less educated people in this town believe."

"Ripe? He's over-ripe—rotten!" announced Mould, confidently.

Mr. Baxter rose suddenly from his arm-chair.

"Gentlemen," he said, "you insult me in my own house. It is your privilege to do so. You are my guests——"

I thought it time to interfere. I crossed the room, gently lowered my old friend into his seat again, and turned to the company. They were all on their feet by this time.

"Now look here," I announced, in what I always hoped is a breezy voice, "you people really must keep your debates academic. Here you are, all flying straight up in the air over some twopenny-ha'penny point of scholarship, and exciting one of my most valued patients"—I patted Baxter solemnly on the shoulder—"to an attack of insomnia! You mustn't do it, you know—especially just now."

"What do you mean, just now?" asked Ada, quickly. She shot an apprehensive glance at her grandfather's drawn features.

"I mean this. You know the opening of Crake Hall takes place on Saturday?"

Everyone looked up, surprised at the diversion.

"Yes; what of it?" said Pettigrew.

"You know that an address of welcome and grateful thanks is to be read to Mr. Crake by a representative citizen of the town?"

"Yes," said Pettigrew, again; and he said it with an intensity which gave him away badly.

"Well, Mr. Baxter here—our very dear and esteemed friend Mr. Baxter"—I spoke the words deliberately, and felt the old shoulder suddenly stiffen under my hand—"has been unanimously selected by the Council"—I breathed a prayer that the rector might not have failed me—"to read that address. That is why I am thoroughly angry with you all for tiring him out with your conundrums. He is not a young man or a strong man; and I want to have him in first-class trim for his appearance on Saturday. Home to bed, all of you!"

"Outside!" commanded Miss Weeks; and shepherded the entire company into the passage, closing the door behind her.

Baxter and I were left alone. I decided to say something cheerful.

"Well," I remarked, "I think the Council's invitation came to you at a very appropriate moment."

Baxter raised his head, and I noticed that he seemed to have grown many years older.

"I fear you have done me an ill service, sir," he said. "Unintentionally, of course," he hastened to add.

"In what way?"

"I cannot accept the Council's invitation."

"Why not? I'll have you fit and well by Saturday."

"It's not that, sir. I cannot do it."

"Why not?"

"Because—because I happen to be an impostor!"

"Oh, come! You must not take things too much to heart. A man can be a sound scholar without knowing very much about Greek or German."

"It's not that, sir."

"What, then?"

"I can neither read nor write."

VI.

I MIXED a glass of weak whisky and water, and made him drink it. Presently he began to talk—in a low voice, with pauses for breath; but after a while with a flicker of his old graciousness and dignity.

"The late Archdeacon, sir, used to observe

that a man should have no secrets from his banker, his lawyer, or his doctor. (He had a great many from all three, but no matter!) I have no banker, and no lawyer; but I have a doctor—a very kind doctor—and I am going to tell him something which it is only fair he should know.

"I was born before the days of free education. My circumstances were extremely humble. I passed the first years of my life on a canal barge. (My uncle steered the barge. I think he was my uncle.) It is difficult to educate children so reared. So I grew up illiterate. My uncle died. I earned my living as best I could. I learned to cipher a little in my head and to read the ordinary numerals; but the alphabet remained a mystery to me."

"Why did you not learn to read and write?"

"I did try. At the age of twenty I determined to master my ignorance. I purchased a primer, and endeavoured to teach myself. But that task was hopeless. I entered a night-school—and they asked me what I wished to study. Languages—mathematics—science—engineering? How could I, a great grown man, tell them that I wanted to learn to read and write? I hurried out of the building.

"Then I married. I married a woman as unlettered as myself. Whom else could I ask? But we were happy together, in our humble way."

"Had you children?"

"One daughter—Ada's mother. You may depend upon it we sent *her* to school! And she learnt quickly—far too quickly for me. I had cherished a hope that my child and I might commence our education together. But how could the muscle-bound intellect of an illiterate of thirty keep pace with the nimble wits of a sharp little girl?"

THE nimble wits of a sharp little girl! Somehow I seemed to recognize that portrait.

"My daughter had passed the goal almost before her father had started. Once more, discouraged and baffled, I relinquished my ambitions; I was a foolish fellow to have entertained them at all. But my child was good to me—very good. Although she possessed neither the art nor the patience to teach me my letters, she discovered in me my one talent—quite a phenomenal aptitude for memorization. Compensation, probably. If I heard an ordinary newspaper article read over once or twice I could repeat it word for word without prompting. And so to satisfy my hungry soul I would beg my little daughter to read aloud to me her school tasks, or her evening lessons—elementary history, geography, and the like. I never forgot them: they were the first real learning I ever possessed. I can repeat them still—and I think they kept me sane.

"My daughter grew up, married, had a daughter of her own; died, and I was alone again. Suddenly I realized that I had passed middle age. I was no longer able-bodied, and I began to realize that when the body begins to fail it is the brain that must carry on. And I had no brain—nothing but a few instincts and rules of life. They were wholesome instincts and healthy rules of life; but as a means of livelihood they were valueless. I began to slip down. I supported myself by odd and menial tasks; I cleaned knives and boots; I sold newspapers which I could not read; I spent long hours as a night watchman, occupying my mind by repeating to myself passages from my little girl's school-books.

"Then came a hard winter; work was scarce enough for skilled labourers, let alone unskilled. As for the illiterate, there was no market for them at all. I tramped from London to try my fortune elsewhere; and came to Broxborough. I was destitute; I sang in the streets for bread—songs I had learnt by listening in public-houses or at popular entertainments in my younger days. And there the late Archdeacon found me. I was a stranger, and he took me in." He was silent again.

"He was very good to you?" I said, presently.

"He was an angel from heaven, sir."

"But didn't he teach you to read?"

The old man looked up at me piteously.

"Sir, I never confessed to him that I could not. And he never found me out. Why should he? I was his servant, engaged on purely domestic duties. Such clerical work as dealing with tradesmen involved was attended to by the housekeeper. One day my master asked me if I had read the Prime Minister's speech, and I replied that I never read the newspapers. I intended the statement to be a confession, leading up to a fuller confession; but instead, the good old man took me to mean that I despised politics and journalism and was interested only in philosophy and literature. From that day he admitted me to all the privileges of his literary companionship. His favourite hobby was reading aloud—preferably passages from the classics—and he had few to read to. None, in fact. I was appointed his audience. Every evening we sat together, and he read aloud to me, with every kind of illuminating comment. My peculiar faculty for memorization, intensified by the absence of any other medium of self-cultivation, enabled me to commit to memory the greater part of what he read and said. At the end of ten years I could quote long passages from most of the standard works of literature. When

the dear old man died I was a human fountain of quotations—poetical, historical, philosophical. Just that, and nothing more. Once more I had to make a niche for myself in the world. My accumulated lore was my sole asset. So I took this little house, and set up my useless—because mainly ornamental—little library, and endeavoured to win the respect of my new neighbours by dispensing an erudition which was in reality second-hand. Second-hand, sir!" He looked up wistfully. "Am I an impostor?"

"All learning is second-hand," I said. "You are not an impostor."

He rose to his feet and took my hand.

"You have lifted a load from my mind," he said. "Confession is good for the soul. But you will understand now why I cannot deliver that address."

"Why not?" I repeated. "I will get a copy of it for you, and you can learn it by heart."

"You can do that?"

"Certainly."

The colour came back to his face.

"The time is short," he said, eagerly—"very short; and my memory is not what it was; but I will try. Ada shall read it to me, and read it to me, and read it to me, until I am word-perfect! I *will* succeed! It will be wonderful!"

VII.

AT the Municipal luncheon which followed the inauguration of Crake Hall one chair was vacant, the Mayor, in his opening remarks, referring sympathetically to the fact. Mr. Baxter, to whom had fallen the honour of reading the address of welcome to their distinguished guest that morning, had found the strain of the proceedings rather too great for his advanced years, and had reluctantly begged to be excused from participating further in the ceremonies of the day. In short, Mr. Baxter had gone home to bed. Later in the proceedings, the Lord Lieutenant also alluded to the matter. His Lordship was a statesman of somewhat limited ideas, and it is just possible that he was grateful to have had a topic suggested to him. So he spoke quite feelingly of the chair—the chair which was to have been occupied by "our eminent fellow-citizen, Mr. Baxter."

Meanwhlle the recipient of these testimonials lay a-dying in his own front parlour. Ada Weeks had put him straight to bed there on his return, utterly exhausted, from the inauguration. All his frail physical powers had been concentrated for three days on making himself word-perfect in the address—which he had delivered, by the way, flawlessly. Now reaction had come. An hour later, more nearly frightened than I had ever seen her, Ada fetched me.

My patient had just asked me faintly, but fearlessly, one of the last questions that mortal man can ask, and I had given him his answer.

"I am quite ready," he replied, calmly. "I am only seventy-four; but it is well that a man should go at the zenith of his career."

"Are there any arrangements you would like to make?" I asked. "Anything you would like to say?"

"Yes. Is Ada there?"

"Of course I am there!" The small, stricken figure crouching on the other side of the bed put out a skinny paw and took the old man's hand. She held it steadfastly for the rest of the time he lived.

"Would you like to see the rector?" I asked.

"No, no. I am at peace with God. It is of my little granddaughter that I would speak." His voice was stronger now. "My annuity dies with me. I have some small savings, which she will receive. But they will not keep her. I shall be grateful if you will exert your influence, sir, in enabling her to go into service."

"There is a vacancy in my house, if Ada will come," I said.

"Thank you. Will you go to the doctor, Ada?"

Ada, with tears running freely at last, nodded in answer; and the dying man proceeded to the business which was ever uppermost in his thoughts.

"Then, sir, my library."

"Yes. What are you going to do with it? Leave it to the town?"

"No, no, no, no!" He was strangely emphatic.

"What, then?" I asked. I had an uneasy feeling that the library was going to be bequeathed to me, and I did not want it in the least. But my fears were relieved at once.

"I intend to leave it to Ada—temporarily."

"Temporarily?"

"Yes. But as she will be an inmate of your household, she will probably desire to take you into her confidence, and possibly avail herself of your assistance." His voice failed again; his grip on life was relaxing rapidly. Then he recovered himself, and almost sat up.

"Will you promise me, sir, to assist Ada to carry out my wishes with regard to the disposal——?"

"I promise," I said. "Don't exhaust yourself."

The old man sank back, with a long and gentle sigh.

"Then I die contented, and reassured. Re——" His voice died away again. Then he rallied for a final effort :—

"I have lived respected, I think!"

That was all.

I looked across to Ada and nodded. Characteristically, she rose from her knees, crossed to the window, and drew down the blind.

VIII.

NEXT morning, Ada Weeks and I sat facing one another in my study, across a newly opened packing-case. It contained Mr. Baxter's library.

"But why must we?" I asked.

"We needn't worry why. He said every blessed book was to be destroyed, and that's all there is about it. Mr. McAndrew is burning rubbish outside; I've told him we've got some more for him. Let's get it over, and go back to granpa—sir," concluded Ada, suddenly, remembering somewhat tardily that she was addressing her employer.

We unpacked the books and then staggered into the garden with arms full, to where McAndrew's bonfire was burning fiercely. McAndrew himself, having regard to his chronic interest in other people's business, I had dispatched upon an errand. Soon the encyclopædia and the theological works were engulfed in flame. Some odd volumes followed. I cremated my old friend Robert Southey with my own hands. This done, we returned to the packing-case and delved again.

"Did Mr. Baxter wish everything to be burned?" I asked. "What about the presentation volumes—the Shakespeare, for instance?"

"They was *all* to be burned," announced Ada, doggedly, lowering her head into the case and avoiding my glance.

"Very well," I said.

Suddenly Ada looked up again, fiercely.

"Cross your heart and wish you may die if you look inside one of them!" she commanded.

I meekly took the grisly oath. But chance was too strong for us. Ada, eager to keep me entirely aloof from the mystery, attempted to lift four large volumes out of the case at once. The top volume, the presentation Shakespeare itself, slipped off the others, fell upon the floor, and lay upon its back wide open. I could not help observing that it was a London Telephone Directory.

For a moment Ada and I regarded one another steadily. She did not wink an eyelash. Indeed, it was I who felt guilty.

"I may as well see them all now," I said.

"Please yourself," said Ada, coldly.

IT was a strange collection. There were three telephone directories in all—all old friends of mine, and peculiarly adapted, from their size and dignity, for presentation purposes. (I think they were Shakespeare, Milton, and Dante. The presentation Tennyson, however, proved to be a bulb catalogue.) There was a Hall and Knight's Algebra, from which, in my presence, the old man had frequently and most movingly quoted Keats. Homer, as Pettigrew had correctly indicated, was an elementary German grammar. Plato's "Apology" was Mr. Chardenal's First French Course.

"He used to get them cheaper than the real ones," explained Ada. "Besides, what did it matter to him, anyhow?"

What indeed? Poor old boy!

I worked through the whole collection—the miscellaneous flotsam of second-hand bookshops and jumble sales—old novels sold in bundles; old directories sold as waste paper. Every book was neatly covered, and decorated with a sprawling number—the sight of which, although it advertised nothing to the outside world but the position of a book on a shelf, had never failed, for more than thirty years, to switch on the right record in that amazing repertoire.

Idly, I picked out the last book in the box. It was a stumpy little volume, bearing the number twenty-five.

"That's 'Orace," said Ada, promptly. "It's a real one—in Latin; only it has the English on the opposite page. We used that a lot."

I turned over the time-soiled leaves, and my eye encountered a familiar passage. I looked up.

"I think he would have liked to have a small inscription on the coffin," I said. "We can arrange it when we go back to the house. There's a line here that seems to me to describe him very accurately."

"Read it," said Ada. I did so :—

"*Of upright life and stainless purity.*"

"Yes, he was all that," said Ada, thoughtfully. "Never done nothink on nobody; and always the gentleman. It will look nice on the plate. How does it go in Latin?"

I read aloud the ancient tag :—

"*Integer vitæ, scelerisque purus.*"

Ada nodded her head vigorously.

"Put it in Latin," she said. "He'd have liked it that way. Besides, it'll learn Mould and Pettigrew and that lot!"

Marriage

by

ARNOLD BENNETT

THE ORDEAL

OF all human enterprises marriage is the most serious, and has the greatest effect upon the lives of the performers. There may be cases in which a self-centred man of very powerful individuality and very mild affections espouses a cipher or a living "Yes, dear," and continues his development and career seemingly uninfluenced by the fact of marriage; but even in such cases the influence, though indirect or merely negative, can be traced. As for the majority of men, marriage tremendously, vitally, and inevitably transforms their existence. And all women who marry, with scarcely an exception, accomplish the supreme personal and social act of their destiny. Two events only are more momentous to a woman than marriage. The first is her birth, over which she has no control; and the second is her death, over which she has but little control. These statements are all platitudes. Yet some people, including some women, appear to undertake marriage with the careless nonchalance of birds.

Nobody at all fully realizes at first the immense gravity and difficulty of the affair. Perhaps it is just as well that nobody does—otherwise there might be a disastrous decline in the marriage-rate, and organized society might fall into ruin sooner than even the most pessimistic prophets have predicted. Marriage, indeed, despite its seriousness, must not be treated too seriously all the time. Imagine a newly-wedded couple whose continual uppermost thought was: "We are in a situation of extreme difficulty and delicacy. Our daily acts are heavy with the gravest consequences." What a household the precious pair would make! Marriage, as we know it, may be, and often is, a mighty queer business, but on the whole the institution works. It might work better, but it works. And it works because it has slowly developed with the slow development of society. In the main it suits and fits us at our present stage of evolution. I have no sympathy with those who cry out that marriage is a failure, or that marriage is slavery, calamity, tragedy, hell, and that something ought to be immediately done about it. Such violent exclamations usually issue from persons who happen themselves to have found acute unhappiness in marriage—innocently or through their own fault. No institution can fairly be condemned because it breaks down utterly in a small minority of instances. Justice for the majority is bound to be unjust to a minority. No system of finance could be conceived which would not involve a few bankruptcies. Surgery now and then proves fatal. And similarly with marriage.

To listen to some malcontents one would suppose that in their opinion marriage alone among human institutions ought to be perfect or perish. Put this simple question to a hundred men and a hundred women after twenty years of marriage: "Do you regret it?" Not ten of the men and not five of the women would honestly reply that they did. And herein is a fair test of the matter. No! I will not subscribe to the theory that marriage is an ordeal to daunt the bravest. There is a credit balance to marriage, and it is entitled to rank rather high among the achievements of human sagacity.

Still, the situation with its difficulties has to be faced. And the average situation is somewhat as follows. The parties to the vast enterprise are suddenly thrown into an extreme form of intimacy. Now, an extreme intimacy makes a heavy demand on skill and patience in the art of living, especially when the collaborators have had no experience of such an intimacy. I will say nothing of the honeymoon, which, in spite of its satisfactions and ecstasies, generally needs the most careful handling, and which rarely passes without disconcerting emotional and other phenomena highly surprising to the two innocents. Honeymoons, in fact, not seldom end worse than they began, and to recover from them may take

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quite a long time. I will assume that the honeymoon has been ideal: which not one honeymoon in a hundred ever is. At the close of it the undergraduates of life find themselves in a home, amid furniture and fitments and in an atmosphere which are strange to both of them. Further, they find themselves necessarily forced into a whole set of novel habits, and these habits are of all sorts, important and trifling, dangerous and safe, agreeable and trying. All is changed, even to the cookery. To persuade the raw, creaking machinery of the household to run smoothly would in itself be a stiff task, and might justly be described as a whole-time job for any able-minded pair; but it is naught compared to the management of the intimacy itself. Mere acquaintances might succeed pretty well in the mechanics of the job when intimates preoccupied with their intimacy would fail. The household machine reacts on the intimacy, and *vice versâ*. Everything that occurs in the household affects, and is affected by, the intimacy.

By accident the toast is like leather. Well, acquaintances would agree calmly that the toast was like leather, and that would be that. But in an extreme form of intimacy boot-soles stuffed into a toast-rack feed the mind with subtle poison, and though the symptoms may be genteelly suppressed, the pathological condition is there, and the malady works underground in the manner of a mole. It will inevitably be so, let the delicious simpletons feign as much as they please that boot-soles in a toast-rack are really rather a lark. The simpletons relate everything to the intimacy, and for each unsatisfactory phenomenon they discover a disturbing cause and foresee a disturbing effect.

Nothing whatever is unimportant in the intimacy. The faculties are fully engaged all the time. And privacy, that safeguard in days of stress, exists no more. One simpleton cannot say to the other:—

"Look here, I want to think things over and collect myself. I'm going out for a solitary walk."

Such an announcement would be the equivalent of a shock of earthquake in the delicate household. Hence, in default of privacy—imperfectly concealed brooding!

Again, each simpleton is plotting against the other. The twain are in love; but love does not in the least prevent plotting against the beloved. They both say to themselves:—

"My spouse is wonderful, and I adore him, or her; but in deep wisdom, knowledge of life, and truly practical skill I am his, or her, superior. Therefore in his, or her, best interests, not to mention my own, it

The honeymoon rarely passes without disconcerting emotional and other phenomena highly surprising to the two innocents.

is my duty by wiles to impose my will upon his, or hers. I must maintain all kinds of pretences. I must be the offspring of the serpent and the dove."

You can now perceive that here is not exactly the material of perfectly mutual understanding, nor the method conducive thereto. And do not tell me that I am cynical or pessimistic about human nature, and that such deceitful carryings-on as I have just sketched are impossible where love reigns. They are notoriously possible. Moreover, love rarely reigns, save as a strictly limited constitutional monarch. Or, phrasing it differently, love may reign but does not govern.

And the most terrible difficulty of all I have yet fearsomely to describe. In the average Anglo-Saxon marriage the parties are in love. They may be in love much or little, but some sort of love exists between them. Though this condition sometimes renders them more exacting in their demands, as a rule it renders them less exacting, and so in a general way makes things easier. But the mischief with being in love, as I have written in a previous chapter, is that it falsifies the judgment.

ONLY the other day a man of thirty, not without experience of life, seriously informed me that the girl to whom he had just engaged himself was, in his deliberate and impartial opinion, the finest girl in the world, and that neither he nor any other man could possibly be worthy of her. I did not commit the imprudence of combating this view. I lied, and forbore to tell him that no girl is the finest girl in the world, and that he was overrating this particular girl and underrating himself. It would have been futile for me to act differently. Shortly afterwards the girl expressed herself in similar terms to me about the man.

This example of a beautiful and touching illusion was not very unusual, and in a greater or less degree the illusion is present in the opening of the majority of marriages. It is right that the illusion should be there; the illusion is fine, and I would not for anything have it altered. But imagine the plight of two people who set out on the enormous adventure of living together handicapped by such an illusion. If the illusion would last for ever all would be well for ever. But it won't. The illusion originates from the state of being in love, and the state of being in love—save in the very rarest and most miraculous instances—is not permanent. It is indeed startlingly impermanent. I do not assert that people cannot and do not love each other steadfastly for a lifetime. But not one person in a hundred thousand remains "in love" for more than a relatively short period. Being in love involves passion, and passion is fleeting, and must be so. Passion cools into affection; often it cools into indifference; and occasionally it is transformed into detestation. These truths are disagreeable; but they are truths, and you will not do away with them by refusing to face them.

Whatever happens, the first illusions concerning the angelic character of the spouse are absolutely certain to disappear. Truth will out, and impartial judgment will prevail. The day must dawn when the spouse will see the other spouse as he or she is seen by detached observers. Happily the process of disillusion is gradual. But it proceeds implacably from stage to stage. And remember that it starts when the parties are first confronted with their unexpected, or unrealized, difficulties, and when they have a special need of secret support. They are learning that marriage, after everything has been said that can be said in its favour, is also a bit of a predicament. They are astonished at the number and the acuteness of the new problems which it presents. They are saddened and perhaps discouraged to discover that it is scarcely more romantic than any other mode of existence, that, indeed, it can be disconcertingly and obstinately prosaic. They tremble as they admit to themselves that the mere material and moral responsibilities attached to it are terrific. And then, at the very crisis of the hidden confusion of spirit, they are grievously distressed by the slow vanishing of the supreme illusion concerning the partner.

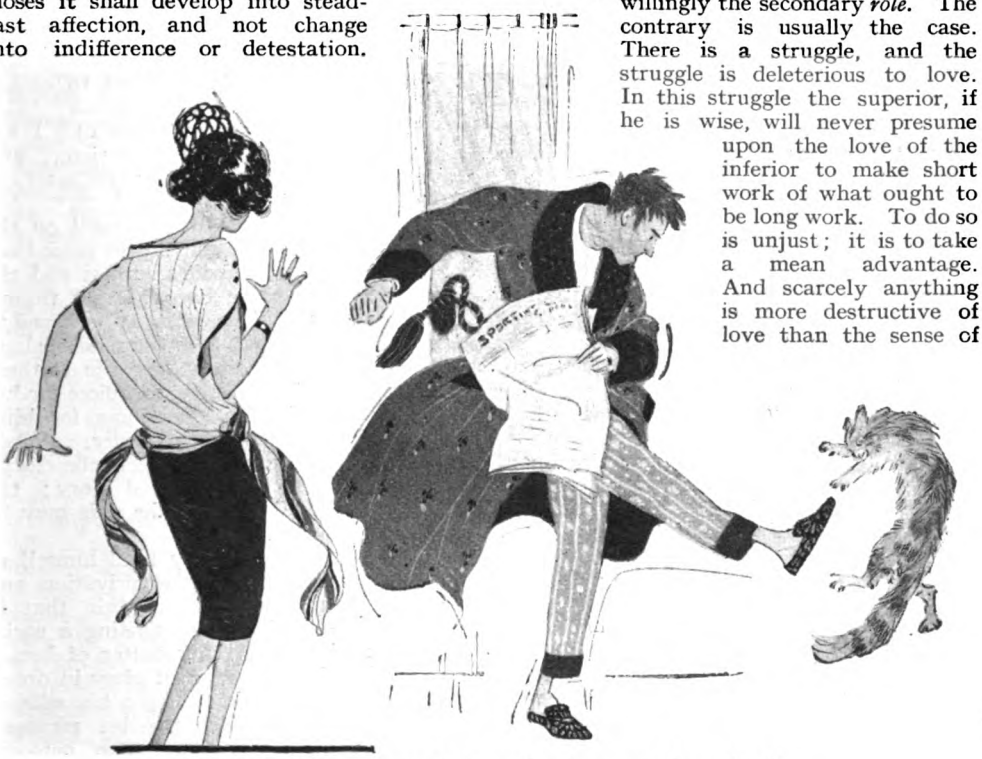
They had desired a perfect partner, or a partner imperfect only in jolly, charming details; a partner different from anybody else; an archangel of a partner. Such a partner was essential to their plans. Had they guessed that the partner was less than unique, they would never have married at all. And lo! The partner is imperfect in more than details; is fundamentally imperfect; is not unique, not different from anybody else—but rather like everybody else; in sum, disappointing.

I do not pretend to have pictured the whole of the psychological drama which passes in the minds of the partners in an average marriage. Far from it. I have confined myself to the darker portions of it. The general tone of the affairs is much lighter and more agreeable. The average marriage is not by any means an unrelieved tragedy of disillusion. The worst that can be said of the average marriage is that it is much more disappointing, dull, tedious, prosaic, than it need be. And if I have examined only certain unfavourable factors in it, I have done so because in the study of these

factors lie the means of making a better thing of marriage.

PRESUMING UPON LOVE.

OBVIOUSLY the first thing to do is to take measures for making the romantic period of passion endure as long as possible, and so arrange that as and when it closes it shall develop into steadfast affection, and not change into indifference or detestation.



And lo! The partner is imperfect in more than details.

Now, in nearly all marriages one party soon begins to impose his will on the other. In a few, no doubt, the balance of power remains even, and a diarchy, which is a dual monarchy, exists; but in exceedingly few. The causes of the uneven division of practical power may be various. It may be due to the control of finance; it may be due to bad temper, which wins by its own unpleasantness; it may be due to health, good or bad: it may be due to other causes, obscure and apparently trifling. But in most cases it is due to sheer force of individuality, which triumphs over all disadvantages.

You will see, for example, a wife who is plain and must depend upon her husband for all monetary supplies whatever, yet successfully imposing her will upon his will by simple moral power. As a rule it is the husband who is the stronger, not only in material but in moral power. In any event one of the two individualities will rise superior to the other, and this will happen as surely as water finds its level, and nothing will stop it, and each party will sooner or later accept the achieved fact.

It does not, however, follow that the secondary party likes or even accepts willingly the secondary *rôle*. The contrary is usually the case. There is a struggle, and the struggle is deleterious to love. In this struggle the superior, if he is wise, will never presume upon the love of the inferior to make short work of what ought to be long work. To do so is unjust; it is to take a mean advantage. And scarcely anything is more destructive of love than the sense of injustice. Naturally the inferior party may be guilty of injustice, may presume upon the love of the superior. But generally speaking the injustice proceeds from the impatience of the stronger partner. He—and in "he" I once more include "she"—will say to himself:—

"She (or he) is in love with me, and therefore she will give way, she will stick it, and it will be all right. I am sure of her whatever happens."

But will it be all right? It may seem all right, and may really be all right—for a time. Love will withstand all manner of blows, yet every blow weakens. And love forgets willingly and eagerly, in the ordinary significance of the word "forget." Nevertheless, that nothing received by the brain can be totally forgotten, erased, wiped clean off, is a scientific truth, amply proved. And as love subsides, unfavourable

impressions of the beloved will all of them infallibly revive, and will react weakeningly upon the already weakened love. The sense of injustice notoriously rankles. And although a person in love is capable of the most singular illusions or delusions about the object of his passion, still his reason somehow simultaneously registers a true judgment of the said object and puts it away into a locked drawer, and when the decline of love deprives the illusion or delusion of necessary nourishment, the dangerous drawer is unlocked and its sinister contents examined. All returns into the mind. And the result may be the birth of indifference or detestation, instead of calm affection.

All love, including maternal love, has this curious double faculty. In the secrecy of her brain, perhaps almost hidden from her heart, the mother will judge the unjust son as impartially as anybody. She is not genuinely deceived by him. And in regard to the son's interests it does not matter, because maternal love is usually pure, unselfish, and quite indestructible. The same cannot be said of conjugal love, which is an immensely more sensitive plant. Maternal love can safely be presumed upon. Conjugal love cannot safely be presumed upon. The realization of this axiom is one of the roots of successful marriage.

THE HUSBAND'S TASK.

LET us now turn to the special *rôle* of the husband. The first and chief duty of the husband is to provide for the household the physical means of subsistence upon the scale which the wife is reasonably entitled to expect, and which he has led her to expect. And from the start! My view is that nothing exceeds this in importance, and that nothing, in the end, bears a closer relation to the happiness or the unhappiness of the union. Love and bliss rarely survive penury. And when they do so, they do so only on the condition that the wife is an angel who does not mind being victimized, defrauded, deluded—call it what you like. In failing to provide the material basis of existence the husband breaks a very definite contract. The "marriage vow" has a wider significance than that which is attached to it in the matrimonial courts of justice. Nor is it fair for the husband to excuse himself by saying:—

"I warned her that we should be poor for a long time, and she offered no objection."

A girl will seldom draw back at such a warning, partly because she does not and cannot believe wholly in its seriousness, and partly because she is too proud and too loyal and too much in love with love. Ten years of cheese-paring poverty may leave the husband almost unscathed by time; but not the wife. Those ten years should be the best decade of the wife's career, and at the close of them, if they are lean years, she may well resemble a flower culled and then deprived of water. She may wear a brave face, but are you sure that in her heart the answer to the question: "Had you known beforehand would you have married all the same?" is not a decided negative?

Nor is it fair for the husband to excuse himself by saying, for instance:—

"I have my career to think of. I am a painter, a composer, a barrister, and I know that I have only to wait in order to succeed."

His success would naturally react on the wife to her advantage, but not in more than a small degree. The wife's success and the husband's success are two different things, though connected. The wife may be forced to pay far too high a price for her modest share in her husband's success. The wife, in these cases of delayed prosperity, sacrifices for her husband; the husband sacrifices for himself, which is infinitely easier. When success arrives, the husband gets the glory; the wife gets merely reflected glory; the reward is unequal, and for the wife may be cruelly insufficient.

If the husband can only fulfil himself at the cost of inflicting undue privation and suffering on his wife, I maintain that in fulfilling himself he is committing a social crime, and I should think better of him if he abandoned the pursuit of glory in order, by hook or by crook, to keep his wife in comfort at the earliest possible moment. There are greater matters than personal success; a husband does not belong solely to himself, and he will not make the best of his life, or of his wife's life, by thinking exclusively of himself.

Again, one of the accepted maxims of marriage is that you should "begin as you mean to go on." I think that a better maxim would be: "Go on as you have begun." This applies to both partners, but perhaps rather more to the husband than to the wife. The husband, absorbed in self-fulfilment, is apt to argue, once again, in another connection:—

"She is mine now, anyhow. I've got her. Hence I can safely neglect her."

Even if the reasoning were true, it is a pretty sort of reasoning for a respectable husband to indulge in! But it isn't true. She is his, materially. He has got her, materially. But in a deeper sense she is his, and he has got her, only so long as he takes the trouble to keep her. Husband and wife may continue to live together in fullest intimacy for years after the wife has ceased

to be the husband's. A woman must be won afresh about once a week. Being won is ninety per cent. of her existence, and probably less than fifty per cent. of her husband's existence.

And the eternal winning is accomplished mainly by a constant attention to externals. Although the wife may be just as appreciative of essentials as the husband, she is certainly more appreciative of externals than he is, and more dependent on them. This is not her fault—it is her nature, unalterable, and not a bit reprehensible.

The husband may neglect his wife in small things — he is criminally careless (while magnificently conscious of a profound unspoken affection for the neglected)! Few wives have much use for tongues that don't speak, lips that don't smile, eyes that don't glisten, arms that don't embrace. Their love is nourished on small outward symptoms of love in husbands. They generally remain girls even after ten children. The husband who forgets this has neither begun as he meant to go on, nor gone on as he began. He is a clumsy ignoramus with a twisted sense of values, and he has a blind spot for half of life.

Further, an otherwise excellent husband may gradually slip into the way of being an offence to the eye or the ear, or to both—he is wrong. He may by preoccupation and obstinacy fall into chronic bad health—he is a sinner (while pluming himself upon his devotion to an ideal, a cause, a profession). Let him think seriously upon trifles and upon externals.

A woman must be won afresh about once a week.

THE WIFE'S TASK.

AS for the *rôle* of the wife, the material and practical side of it ought surely to be beyond the need of discussion. That the husband should be a skilled money-earner is, as I have pointed out in my remarks upon being betrothed, accepted as quite obvious, and it should be equally obvious that the wife should be a skilled housekeeper. Unfortunately, the public opinion which rules the preparation for wifehood has not yet by any means laid it down that a wife must be a skilled housekeeper. I doubt if fifty per cent. of wives at this very day are skilled housekeepers. I know that very many of them are grossly amateurish housekeepers. And nobody seems to mind much. If the husband minds, as he sometimes does, he says little, because public opinion fails to support him: and if he strangely doesn't mind, as he sometimes doesn't, the reason is that he has never been accustomed to expert housekeeping, and does not know what it means.

The day will arrive when a wife who muddles any branch of the management of her house will be branded as the cheat and the waster which she clearly is. Efficient housekeeping, which signifies economical, enjoyable, nourishing, appetizing, clean, and elegant housekeeping, is not an affair demanding genius. It can be achieved by any woman of average brains and average will-to-learn. It is really not more difficult than good dancing—and to-day the young woman who cannot dance well blushes (rightly) for her imperfection.

Now, efficient housekeeping is another of the roots of conjugal happiness, and it is accordingly a highly important part of the wife's *rôle*.

But it is not the most important part. The wife cannot be content to be merely the

administrator of the material home, or even the creator of the material home. Yet wives who know themselves to be efficient housekeepers are too frequently so proud of their achievement that they can see nothing beyond it. (Nay, they are occasionally so proud that they consider the husband to be made for the home instead of the home for the husband; and the stricken man, caught in the ruthless wheels of one machine while at work, finds himself caught in the ruthless wheels of another machine while at rest!) The major part of the wife's *rôle* consists in creating and administering the home as a social organism.

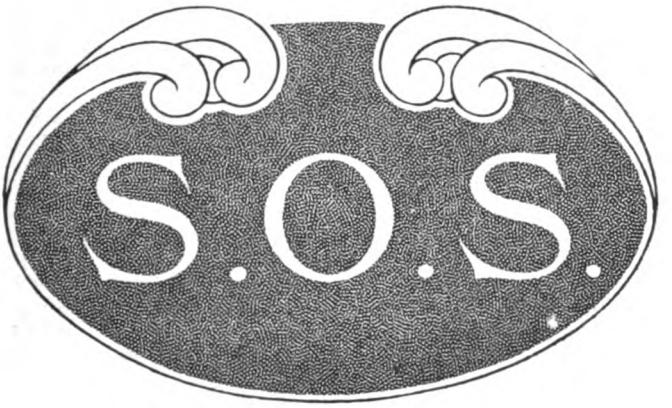
The wife's first duty is to be agreeable to the eye.

THE husband will naturally take some share in this business, but he has less time, and also less inclination, for the job than his wife. No amount of change in the relations of the sexes will appreciably affect the truth of the maxim that the wife's sphere is the home. If the home goes wrong for any reason other than a money-famine or some incurable vice of the husband's, the fault is the wife's fault. The wife must always be *thinking creatively* of the home as a social organism. Hers should be the care of saving it from dullness, monotony, narrowness, and ugliness. She is, and for ever will be, the active centre of it. The home will take its colour and tone from her. Therefore her first duty is herself to be agreeable to the eye and to the ear. She will not make the best of home and of marriage unless she makes the best of herself—at all hours. Think of what this involves.

And she absolutely must exercise charm, whether things are going right or going wrong. (Any chit can be charming when things are all going smoothly.) Women were born to exercise charm. Everyone knows it and admits it. And the wife has no justification for failing to exercise charm until she is dead. A large proportion of women, especially pretty ones, suffer from the illusion that in order to exercise charm they need only continue to exist. A mistake! To exercise charm is an active and not a passive function. It cannot be efficiently done without thought and hard work. It is sometimes very trying and exhausting, like earning money; but it is not less essential than earning money if life is to be fully lived. Let a wife devote herself to this marvellous personal enterprise, and the rest of the social running of the home—making and keeping a circle of friends, taming the brute that survives in most husbands, arranging diversions and diversity, and forty other things—will ensue with a surprising ease.

But even now we are only at the beginning of marriage. There is much to follow.

Next month: "The Continuation of Marriage."



by

F·BRITTEN AUSTIN

ILLUSTRATED BY E·S·HODGSON

CAPTAIN WILMOTT'S first perception, as he opened his eyes to the morning light in his cabin on the lower bridge, was that the weather had worsened. For twenty-four hours the s.s. *Susquehanna*, from Liverpool to New York with more ballast than cargo (as is usual with West-bound freighters across the North Atlantic), had been battling with a north-west February gale. The dizzying lift and drop; the wallowing roll with which she corkscrewed as she pitched; the thud and crash of green seas in violent impact with her structure; the vicious lash of flying scud upon her upper works; the intermittent vibrations of her propeller, soused for a moment or two of effective work, then checked abruptly in its first mad race clear of the water left far below her lifting stern; the howl and scream through the shrouds and stays of the wind that buffeted at the deck-houses as though with a mighty fist: all were eloquent of conditions outside. The ports were darkened with frozen spray. From somewhere adjacent came a whirring moan that intensified to a melancholy wail; the wireless was talking to some other ship, distant on this angry ocean.

Captain Wilmott slipped out of his bunk with a mighty yawn that testified to the hours he had spent upon the bridge last night. Then he got into his boots, jacket, and top-coat—the only articles of which he had divested himself when he turned in. Shaving was a luxury he ignored as superfluous in a winter Atlantic gale. There were no women on board ship to criticize his appearance. He went into the forward compartment of his double cabin, which contained his desk and communicated with the chart-room on the starboard side.

With the mechanical performance of a routine action, he glanced at the barometer—appallingly low—and tore off the date-slip from the block calendar hanging on the wall above his desk. The date half-registered itself in his mind in the instant that a vicious lurch of the ship jerked him heavily into the screwed-down revolving-chair. He sat there, staring at the calendar dumbly designating this day's particularity out of the innumerable days that had preceded and were to follow.

"Good God!" he muttered to himself. "February twenty-fourth! And I hadn't remembered——!"

He sat there motionless in the chair, his hands gripped upon the arms, staring at the calendar, his powerfully-featured face set in the cast of a harsh emotion. The mouth under his moustache tightened itself to a hard line above the massive thrust of his jaw. He sat there staring at the calendar—but he no longer saw it.

He looked at a vision of himself on a February 24th three years back, striding up the forecourt path of a pretty little suburban villa. Behind him was the nostalgia of twelve months' "tramping" from port to port on distant seas. Awaiting

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him was—surely !—Gwen. He could almost hear her voice in the welcome he imagined. She had not been at the dock. There was no face at the window. His telegram, perhaps, had miscarried. He had turned the key in the front door—opened it to the silence of a house empty of any human being, to a heap of letters lying uncollected on the doormat and dust thick on all the furniture.

He chilled at the memory of that devastating shock, and his face set yet more grimly, inexorably hard. He heard, as though repeated by a phonograph in his brain, his own words, uttered fiercely vindictive through his clenched teeth in the solitude of that deserted home, when, some days later, the last piece of furniture went out of it.

" I'll get on your track, Captain Buttevant —as sure as God made me ! "

The threat had become part of him, the conscious purpose of his doggedly tenacious nature. All that was vital in him endorsed it afresh, as he stared at those two black figures on the calendar.

It was for Captain Buttevant, that unknown sinister personality he could imagine only from report, that his hatred glowed like a fire in dark depths of himself. He had never seen him, had not even found a photograph. It was one of his torments that sometimes he visualized him under one aspect, sometimes under another. The glib-tongued recitations of his wife's misconduct detailed by self-righteous neighbours had, curiously, made him only almost indignant on her behalf. It was for the man—the man who had played upon her inexperience, her girlish craving for affection—that he nursed an implacable resentment. His one object in life was to meet that Captain Buttevant who had profited by a prolonged detention in the port for repairs to steal away the girl-wife who had known but a few months of married life with her husband. From the day that Captain Buttevant's ship had sailed away, three months prior to his return, none had seen or heard of Mrs. Wilmott. The inference was irresistible.

With the seafarer's contempt for the slow and expensive intricacies of the law, he had sought no legal redress. Captain Wilmott, since the days he was mate of a leaky wind-jammer with a crew of polyglot toughs, had been a law unto himself. He had disconcerted the garrulous neighbours by an obstinate silence, sold up the furniture, and gone to sea again.

For three years there had been no spot of land that was home to him. But for three years each port he had entered had lured him with a possibility dispelled almost as soon as the mooring-ropes were thrown. Captain Buttevant was never there. He heard vague rumours of him occasionally, sea-gossip at third or fourth hand, which named him in connection with different ships and in differing trades. But the man himself remained ever unmet, an elusive phantom ever beyond the horizon-line of distant oceans.

A BELL clanged harshly from somewhere beneath the captain's cabin, heard above the wild tumult of the gale. It was the summons to breakfast. Captain Wilmott rose, steadied himself with a grip on the chair as the floor mounted in a violent lurch under his feet, and scowled again at those two heavy black numerals on the calendar which announced this ill-omened anniversary.

" I'd sell my soul to meet you, Captain Buttevant ! " he muttered to himself. " And when I do—God help you ! " It was no vain rhetoric. No one would have called Captain Wilmott a religious man, but he was sombrely superstitious to the core. He pledged himself with grim recklessness in that oath.

Then, choosing his moment as the *Susquehanna* rolled her lee side under, he opened the heavy door that swung back behind him with a crash as she lifted again, and, propelled on the blast of wind that almost tore his hold from the rails, slid nimbly down the ladder to the slippery, ice-covered iron deck and dodged into the saloon under the bridge.

The place was muggy with steam-heat as he entered. At the long table transversely across the forward end, the first and second officers, the chief engineer, and the senior Marconi operator were already at breakfast. He took his place at the head of the table, frowned at the menu the steward held for him.

Breakfast, despite the compartmented fiddles over the table, was an operation demanding deftness of hand that morning. The cups and plates slithered ceaselessly from side to side in the limited table-space allowed them as the ship pitched and lurched and wallowed in the waves that bore down at an angle upon her starboard bow. Every now and then all the crockery in the pantry went sliding to one startling, comprehensive smash that was surely final. The row of ports that looked out upon the forward deck were drenched at every instant with the green seas that shot up like a wall above the fo'c'sle and flew to a crashing impact with the superstructure. At frequent and irregular intervals, as her cascading bows lifted to the grey sky, she " pounded," a wave breaking under her fore-foot tossed high by the preceding roller, with a jarring shock that seemed to shake every bolt and rivet in the ship.

" Dirty morning, sir," observed Davidson, the first officer, in an effort to make a little conversation, " and looks like getting worse."

" It does," agreed Captain Wilmott, succinctly. " What's she doing ? "

" Not more than three and a half."

" No use forcing her, sir, this weather," interjected McGlashen, the chief engineer, prompt to justify economy in coal consumption.

" Not the least."

The tone of Captain Wilmott's curt response discouraged conversation, and they relapsed into the silence of men who have long exhausted every topic of real interest.

It was McGlashen who made the next attempt to relieve the morose taciturnity of the meal.

" Heard from the missus this morning, Marconi ? " he asked, waggishly.

The senior Marconi operator had married at the end of the last voyage, and notoriously had been spending a goodly fraction of his month's pay on an interchange of radiograms with his pining bride.

The young man flushed self-consciously.

" No," he said, shortly. " I haven't."

" She'll have forgotten she ever married you by the time you get back," McGlashen teased him. The senior Marconi, as a Benedict, was, of course, fair game for witticism.

The young man frowned. His nerves were on edge this morning.

" I don't come away again ! " he said, with the unexpected vehemence of a secret brooding that escapes control. " When I get back I get a shore job, if it's only to sweep a crossing ! "

Captain Wilmott spoke suddenly from his end of the table.

" The man that goes to sea and leaves a wife behind him is a fool ! " he said, with harsh sententiousness.

There was a silence at this. All at that table were married men. It was the second officer, on his first trip in the *Susquehanna*, who broke the unpleasant constraint.

" That's just what I told my young brother, sir," he said. " He married last time he was home. He used to be on the *Ocean Star*—with Captain Buttevant——"

" With who ? " The skipper turned sharply on him.

" With Captain Buttevant, sir. Do you know him ? " The second mate was evidently disposed to get on a friendly footing with his new skipper.

Captain Wilmott ignored the question.

" The *Ocean Star*, you said ? What trade's she on ? "

There was something peculiar in his intonation which made the others glance up at the hard, expressionless mask of his face.

" I heard she's just been put on an Atlantic charter, sir," said the second mate, a little awkward under the steel-grey eyes that held him. " New York to Havre. My brother got a transfer. He didn't get on with Captain Buttevant. Did you say you knew him, sir ? "

Once more the second mate received no answer. Instead, something in Captain Wilmott's face suggested that another question was on the point of utterance, but it did not issue from his lips. He turned away his head abruptly. The second mate was abashed into an uncomfortable silence at this lack of response. He shifted his eyes uneasily from the stern face that frowned at thoughts hidden from him. Not an easy man to know, this skipper, he thought to himself—a queer, hard devil, if ever there was one.

THE melancholy wail of the wireless transmitter, set suddenly at work, made itself heard, faint down here in the saloon, through the crashing, thudding, howling tumult of the gale.

" There's your colleague using up power again ! " said McGlashen to the senior Marconi, in mock lament. " It's a good job he's not married—or we'd never make New York ! "

" I wonder who he's talking to ? " queried Davidson, finishing up his last mouthful of marmalade and rising to relieve the third officer on the navigating bridge. The senior Marconi followed him out of the saloon.

The second mate and McGlashen cocked their heads on one side, in that instinctive curiosity always evoked by communication with an unknown ship at sea, as though trying to decipher, from the moaning, eerie wail of the transmitter, the purport of the silent messages pulsing through the ether from the lofty aerials between the masts. Captain Wilmott sat lost in frowning thought, apparently oblivious to his surroundings. The wail ceased, recommenced after a moment or two of silence.

" He's got a lot to say," commented McGlashen, voicing the engineer's eternal grievance. " Having a little friendly chat, I suppose. Power costs nothing to those chaps ! "

The junior Marconi entered the saloon, went up to the skipper. He held out a telegram-form.

" An S.O.S., sir ! "

Captain Wilmott turned sharply to him, startled out of his reverie.

" What's that ? " He snatched the message-form from the boy's hand

"An S.O.S., sir. The *Ocean Star*——"

The lad stopped, in respect. The skipper was reading the message for himself.

"*S.O.S.—S.O.S.—Ocean Star approximate position lat.* 42.20 *long.* 47.50 *drifting lost propeller cargo loose making water immediate assistance required.—S.O.S.*"

For a long minute the skipper sat staring at the piece of paper in his hand.

The talkative second officer, of course, could not refrain from a conversational word.

"The *Ocean Star*, sir? Funny we should have been talking about her! What's her trouble?"

Captain Wilmott rose to his feet without reply. Might as well talk to a statue, thought the second officer, resentfully, glancing at the baffling taciturnity of those rugged features. The skipper turned upon him.

"Work out our position as near as you can, Mr. Trent," he said, a curious harshness in his tone. "And bring it me in the chart-room at once."

Captain Wilmott went out of the saloon, clambered up against the buffets of the gale to the chart-room on the lower bridge.

He went straight to the blank chart of the mid-Atlantic, bent over it, ruler and dividers in his hand, plotting out the ship's track since the pencil-point that marked her position at yesterday's noon. Under that canopy of grey cloud, doubled underneath with gale-torn masses, no direct observation was possible. Her position had to be deduced from dead-reckoning.

He turned to see the second officer by his side.

"What do you make it?" he asked, abruptly.

The second officer glanced at the figures he had worked out.

"42.30—47.29, sir."

"You haven't allowed enough for leeway." Wilmott's tone had that same curious harshness. "I make it 42.25—47.30." He bent over the chart again.

"Near enough, sir," commented the second mate. He glanced at the *Ocean Star's* message, open on the chart. "She'll be rather more than twenty miles away, drifting south-east. We're only doing three and a half—to catch her we shall have to get into a beam sea that'll roll the funnel out of us in this weather! And about five hours of it, at that! I doubt if it's possible——"

Captain Wilmott straightened himself.

"I command this ship, Mr. Trent," he said, icily. "That will do."

The second officer went out of the chart-room like a dog that had been kicked.

THE captain stood in a sudden solitude, staring at that message lying on the chart, alone with a possibility that seemed automatically to fill his chest and clench his fists. A ghost of a grim smile came into his face as he bent down to prick on that map-space of empty sea the estimated position of the *Ocean Star*. The unpleasant smile vanished in the frown of a sudden doubt. The *Ocean Star* did not necessarily imply Buttevant himself. The doubt held him motionless for a moment. Then, with the brusque gesture of a man who cuts through uncertainty, Captain Wilmott forced open the chart-room door against the fury of the gale, and staggered, borne aft on the wind that nearly threw him on his face, to the wireless-room on the weather-side of the lower bridge deckhouses.

The junior operator stood up respectfully as he entered their narrow quarters. The senior sat at his desk, telephone-receivers clipped over his head, taking down an incoming message. He looked round to the skipper.

"She's in a bad way, sir. Water in the engine-room. She can't be very far away. We're getting her signals very strong——"

Captain Wilmott ignored this information. The young junior operator, glancing at him, was startled at the expression of his skipper's face. He thought he read an utterly incomprehensible savage satisfaction in those harsh features.

The captain spoke curtly, a repressed excitement altering his voice.

"Just ask who's in command of her."

The operator tapped at his key. The message went out in a loud uncanny crackle of diabolical blue sparks from the dynamo.

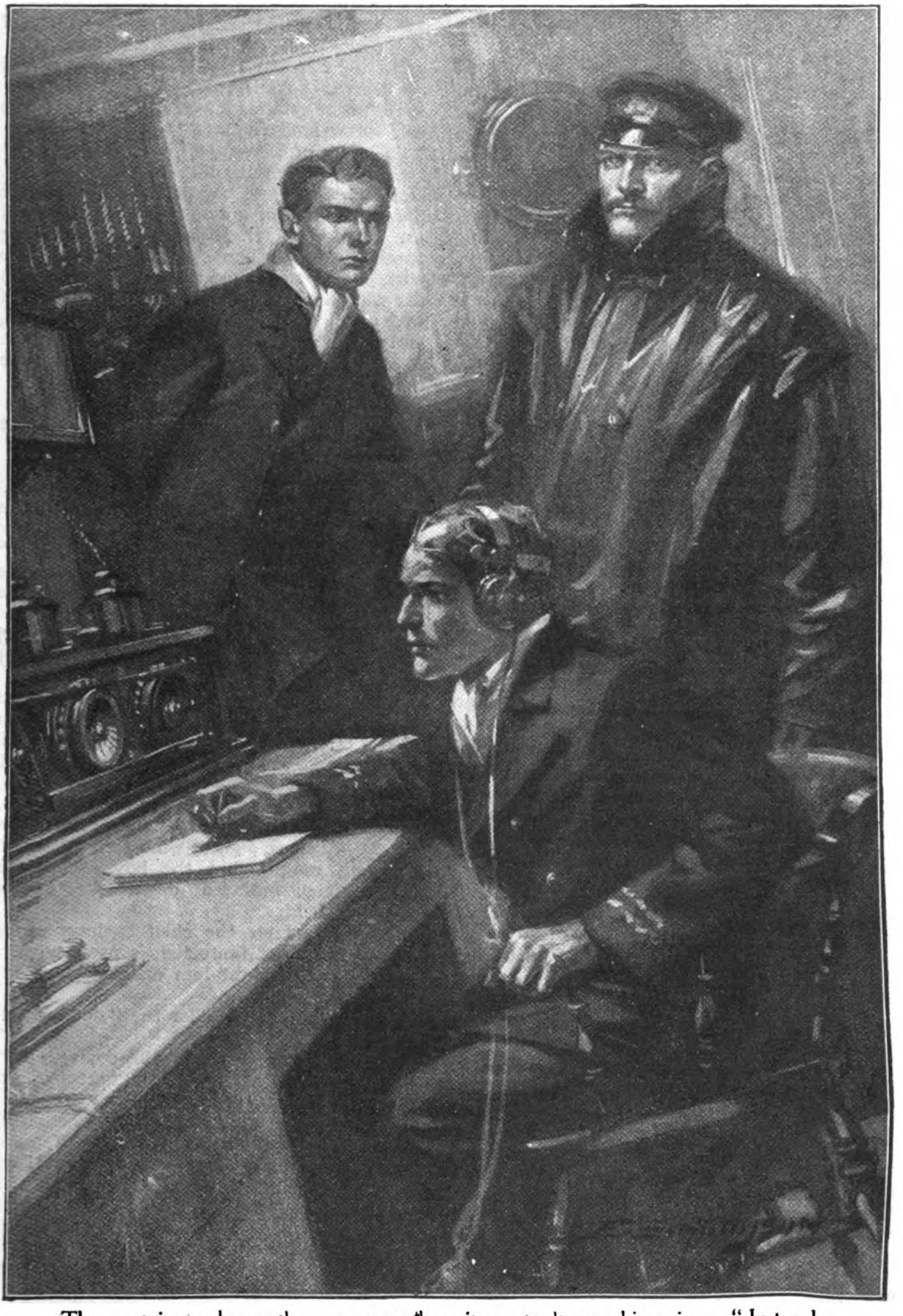
There was silence and a pause. Then the operator, interpreting signals inaudible to all but him, began to write quickly on the message-form in front of him. It was the answer. Captain Wilmott craned over the operator's shoulders.

"——*Captain Buttevant in command*——"

The operator's hand went on writing, but for the moment Captain Wilmott saw only that first phrase. Half-anticipated though it was, its significance struck home to him with a thrilling shock.

"——*Captain Buttevant in command*——"

Captain Wilmott drew himself erect, his mouth tightening to a hard, cruel line, frowning in front of him as though he saw in his mind's eye that stretch of angry ocean where his enemy drifted helplessly in peril of his life. And it was to him that this enemy appealed! "I'd sell my soul to meet you——!" His own words re-echoed in him as though uttered anew by some malicious imp of remembrance. Meet? He had only to pass by!



The captain spoke curtly, a repressed excitement altering his voice. "Just ask who's in command of her."

"What shall I tell him, sir?" asked the operator, passing him the written message. "They seem pretty desperate——"

Captain Wilmott glanced at the unread remainder.

"——*engine-room almost flooded—cannot speak much longer—for God's sake come quickly*——" Then his eye reverted to the commencement, which distinguished this message from all others. "——*Captain Buttevant in command*——"

Both operators looked at him, awaiting his decision. Outside, the gale in fury raved at the labouring ship; she shook, every plate of her, with a jarring vibration of rivets at strain, as she dived and wallowed in the terrific seas that leaped at her with a sickening thud and a vicious lash of spray high up against the wireless-room. The walls quivered under the hammer blows of the wind. In a momentary lull the funnel aft of them sizzled with salt water on its heated surface. This petty sound lasted but an instant, was engulfed in the familiar staggering crash of a green sea breaking over her bows, sweeping aft along her deck. It was a poor look-out for a helpless ship in such a sea as this.

Captain Wilmott turned to the operator.

"Are there any other ships about?"

'None within a hundred miles, sir."

Captain Wilmott nodded with a grim satisfaction. It was between him and the *Ocean Star*—Buttevant! None could intervene.

"What shall I tell him, sir?" the operator asked again, anxious for those desperate souls listening for his response.

Captain Wilmott took a deep breath. His eyes glittered.

"Tell him we're coming to him! But—understand—if he asks my name, don't give it!"

"Very good, sir." The operator accepted the prohibition without comment. He had been long enough with Captain Wilmott not to ask him for reasons.

THREE years ago Captain Wilmott's ship was another than the *Susquehanna*. It was at least odds on that Buttevant had never heard of his transfer, would not connect him with the ship coming to his rescue. The wireless operator could not look into his skipper's mind. The smile of grimly malicious enjoyment of an anticipated surprise, eluding the stern repression of that tight-lipped mouth, was an enigma to him.

The blue flames began to crackle once more over the wireless dynamo as Captain Wilmott went out again into the gale. The choking blast of wind almost tore him from the deck as he fought his way against it, up to the navigating-bridge, where the first officer crouched behind the canvas "dodger" and an oilskinned seaman balanced himself at the wheel.

He went up to Davidson, curtly ordered the change of course.

The mate grinned cheerfully at him on his way to the steersman.

"Chance of salvage, sir?"

Captain Wilmott did not answer him. He stared over the top of the "dodger" at the wild waste of grey-green, foam-streaked sea that lifted itself into long, hurrying parallel ridges. The ship swung round to port, rolled sickeningly, scuppers under, in the trough of a mighty wave, righted herself with a jerk that nearly threw him off his feet, and threatened to shake the masts out of her. A voice shouted into his ear. It was the mate, once more beside him.

"Do you think she'll stand it, sir?"

He glanced at the suddenly anxious face of his subordinate, scowled at him angrily.

"She's got to stand it!"

He went to the navyphone—the high-powered telephone communicating with the engine-room—shouted into it.

"Ask Mr. McGlashen to come up here!"

Before the chief engineer could arrive, the junior wireless operator clambered on to the bridge. He brought another message.

"——*engine-room flooded—blowing off steam—last message—may founder any moment—come quick*——"

No steam meant no power for the wireless dynamo. It was the last they would hear of the *Ocean Star* until they sighted her, if sight her they should. But she could still receive messages.

Captain Wilmott turned to the lad.

"Tell them we're coming as fast as we can." A savage gust of wind tore the words from his mouth, but the boy caught his meaning, disappeared down the spray-drenched ladder.

A minute later the chief engineer stood beside him, bad-tempered, soused with a sea that had caught him on his way along the reeling deck.

He crouched low under the "dodger" to make his words heard.

"You can't keep her on this course, sir!" he bawled. "You'll have the funnel out of her!"

The skipper stared at him. It needed no words to make plain that look.

"I want you to get eight knots at least out of this ship, Mr. McGlashen! More if you can!" He also had crouched under the "dodger," and his words came curtly clear-cut, definitely emphatic.

"Eight knots!" The chief engineer almost screamed. "In this weather! D'you know what coal that'll cost—to say nothing of the risk?"

He shrank appalled at the savage face that Captain Wilmott turned on him.

"You'll drive this ship at every ounce she's got in her, Mr. McGlashen! I don't care if you burn the last ton! And I'm responsible for the risk!"

Mr. McGlashen half thought of venturing another expostulation, but the skipper turned his back on him. The chief engineer went cautiously down the ladder, cursing with every objurgatory epithet ever born in the hell-glare of a stokehold.

FIVE minutes later the funnel of the *Susquehanna* was belching forth volumes of black, oily smoke that flattened down on the grey seas to leeward. The ship quivered like a living thing, her deck-planks throbbing, her metal-work vibrating jarringly to the touch, under the thrust and race of her engines at full power. She rolled heavily, wildly, her masts swinging in an exaggerated arc across the sky, as the great moving ridges bore down upon her beam, surged under her in the very moment when it seemed she must be overwhelmed.

She held on her new course to the south-west like a drunken creature in a frenzy of futile haste. The yawing of her bows, swinging in wide divagations despite the hard-worked steersman at the wheel, the sickening, helpless, heavy lurch with which she rose upon the flank of one mighty roller and jerked over to slide down into the trough of the next, thwarted the high-pressure power that drove her, it seemed, almost to the point of extinction. Yet she held on, battened down, doused with green water that boiled in a smother of white foam as it washed across her deck, dipping deep, scuppers under, wallowing from beam to beam, her mast-shrouds, her funnel-stays now sagging loose, now tautening almost to snapping-point as first one side, then the other, took the strain. Time after time it was a miracle that she righted herself as she lay over, paused all but overwhelmed in the momentarily windless valley of a gigantic sea. Time after time it seemed as she swung back that it must be her last escape.

On her bridge, scowling over the top of the "dodger," his eyes frowning into the cloud-curtains drooping over that immensity of grey-green, foam-backed, hurrying, rearing rollers in an infinity of motion from horizon to horizon, stood the incarnation of the will that drove her forward through these perils. Globules of spray poised themselves on the moustache over the thin, hard line of his mouth. He stood immobile, hour after hour, steadying himself with one hand upon the rail, peering into the misty horizon which held a tiny point whereon three years of hate were focused—or perhaps no longer held it.

The mate, aloof from him in the starboard bridge-shelter—there was no sense in getting drenched unnecessarily—glanced from him to the foremast tracing its wild half-circles across the sky, and back to him again, in uneasy apprehension. At any moment those suddenly slackened, viciously tautened stays might snap, the mast go by the board in a wreck which would hold the ship helpless for the surge of a broadside sea. The Old Man must be mad! he thought. He could stand it no longer, ventured on an expostulation which would at least test his superior's state of mind.

"We're asking for trouble, sir—driving her like this!"

The skipper glared upon him. "Trouble!" He laughed unpleasantly, and there was a light in his eyes which frightened the mate. "Mr. Davidson, let me tell you I'll drive this ship through hell to reach those people! And the Devil himself can have all he wants of me if he'll get me there in time! Understand that!"

The mate hesitated between discipline and a suspicion of his sanity. Discipline won. He went without a word to stand by the steersman as a mountainous sea rushed down upon them. It was a ticklish job at the helm that morning. Every half-hour the steersman reached up a hand and clanged an increasing number of strokes upon the bell above his head. It was a little after eight o'clock when that S.O.S. had come in. Four bells had sounded, five bells—six bells. It was eleven o'clock. Allowing for her drift the *Ocean Star* should be in the vicinity if she were still afloat. Captain Wilmott sent the mate aft to read the log. It registered nineteen since the last watch. The skipper smiled grimly. Old McGlashen had done the impossible. He had got—not a fantastic eight—but nearly seven knots out of her since he had his orders.

But where was the *Ocean Star?* Since that last despairing appeal no word had come from her. Her wireless was silenced. Fearful of overrunning her position, he moved to the engine-room telephone to order a slow-down. He stopped, arrested half-way. What was that tiny pin-point of red light in the grey clouds far to windward? It sank, extinguished. An instant later another tiny spark took its place. He whipped out his binoculars, focused them upon a minute, watery coruscation of red glow just visible above the murky horizon. Rockets—the rockets of the *Ocean Star!*

He shouted an order. The *Susquehanna* swung round to starboard, dug her bows into a great wave that came curling down

They saw at last the ship they had risked so much to reach. Dark dots of human figures were visible upon her bridge.

to break in a thunderous cascade upon her deck, climbed the next with fore-peak silhouetted against the sky. She settled into a dogged head-on contest with an endless succession of furious seas that hurled themselves direct upon her, shot up in straight walls of water with the impact of collision, scudded in sheets of stinging spray high over the bridge.

He looked round. The first officer, binoculars to his eyes, was gazing out to those tiny points of constantly renewed light towards which they were heading. The third mate was by his side.

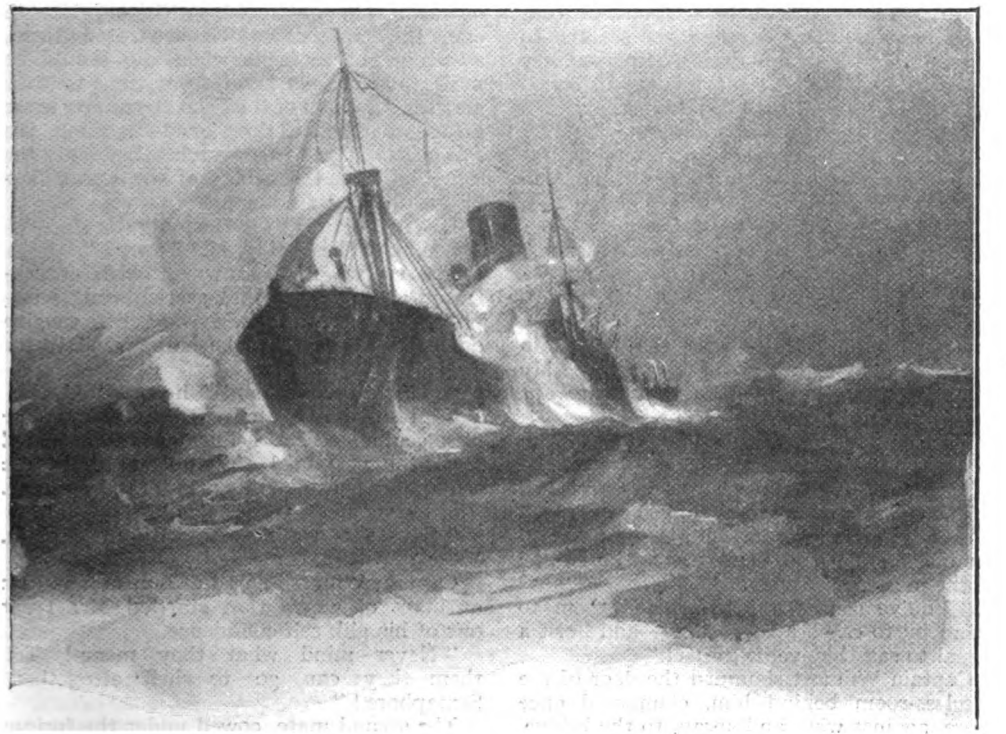
"You!" shouted the skipper. "Tell the wireless to talk to them—say we've sighted them!"

The third mate sprang down the ladder in quick obedience.

The skipper pulled at the first officer's arm.

"Send up some answering rockets, Mr. Davidson! Let them see us!"

He was on edge with impatience, with an unreasoning fear lest in their despair that distant ship's company should abandon themselves, hastening the catastrophe, to their fate, founder before he could get close. But there was no benevolence in this seeming



altruism. His eyes were as pitiless as that grey sea itself, his face grim as fate incarnate.

Behind him one rocket after another sizzled, spluttered, rushed into the air, burst into faint watery light far among the clouds to leeward. He leaned against the "dodger," steadying himself as best he might on the reeling, lifting, plunging platform of the bridge, searching through his binoculars for a dark spot in the welter of wind-torn spume and ragged cloud that overhung the horizon. He distinguished it—nearer than he had expected—a small black silhouette, circled with white foam, visible one moment, vanished the next. Its reappearance on the crest of the next wave was a relief after a prolonged moment of suspense. He held it in vision, with eyes insatiable, as it grew steadily larger, ever more distinct. The *Ocean Star* was drifting before the gale to meet the *Susquehanna* crashing through the seas towards her. No more rockets went up. The two ships were now clearly in sight of one another.

Seven strokes clanged from the bell above the steersman. All the deck officers of the *Susquehanna* were now upon the bridge. They saw, plainly at last, little more than half a mile away, the ship they had risked so much to reach. She lifted, heavily waterlogged, on the flanks of the great rollers that surged towards them with an over-run of eager foam snatched from their heads in the fury of the wind. She was dangerously down by the stern, the seas washing over her after-works with scarce a check. Her smokeless funnel swayed loosely in its stays. A torn rag of headsail, rigged between her foremast and her bows, kept her nose more or less up into the wind to meet the breakers that threatened every moment to overwhelm her. As she subsided into the trough, the top of her masts alone visible for a moment, it seemed each time that she had gone. But she rose again, with yet a reserve of buoyancy, on the ridge of the following wave, water streaming in torrents from her flanks. Dark dots of human figures were visible upon her bridge. One of them waved an arm.

Captain Wilmott turned to the chief officer.

"Rig a lifebuoy and get the rocket apparatus!" he ordered, curtly. "Take her round to windward."

He stood for one more moment staring at the helpless ship, and then went swiftly down the ladder to the wireless-room.

The operator looked round at him, startled at this unexpected entrance, startled even more at the incomprehensible expression on his skipper's face. Had he gone suddenly

mad? The eyes that looked out of that grim, hard-mouthed countenance seemed to blaze at him. An emanation of personality at fever-pitch filled the narrow cabin, belied the tight control of that formidable jaw.

"Are they getting our messages?"

The operator, schooled to discipline, betrayed no perception of that odd note in Captain Wilmott's voice.

"I think so, sir," he replied.

"Right! Send them another message." Captain Wilmott's tone was sharp and decisive. His eyes gleamed. His hard mouth curved slightly in an irrepressible smile. "Tell Captain Buttevant that Captain Wilmott is in command of this ship! My compliments to him, and Captain Buttevant would be safer to stay where he is!"

"Sir?" The operator looked round in amazed protest.

"Send it!" The order was peremptory.

The bewildered operator tapped at his key. The satanic crackle of blue flames leaped around the dynamo, ceased with the ending of the message.

"You've sent that? Now tell them to stand by to catch a rocket-line—and hoist a signal to say they've heard us!"

Captain Wilmott slammed the door of the wireless-room behind him, clambered once more, against wind and spray, to the bridge.

THE *Susquehanna* was making a curve round the crippled ship now close to her, almost under her lee. Her master took in the situation with a glance, clanged the engine-room telegraph sharply to Slow Ahead. Then he looked across to the *Ocean Star* sliding backwards down the slope of a gigantic roller as though she were going to plunge stern-foremost into the depths. Had she got his message?

There was a movement among the little group of men on her bridge, a little ball went slowly up the halliards to her foremast, broke into a flag. It was the answering pennant. Captain Wilmott smiled grimly. Captain Buttevant had received those ironic compliments. He wondered which of that little group of oil-skinned men was his unidentifiable enemy.

He turned to shout down to the mate rigging the rocket-apparatus amidships.

"Ready, Mr. Davidson? Stand by for the word!"

The mate signalled back understanding. The captain turned once more to watch the *Ocean Star*. She drifted towards them, wallowing sluggishly in a smother of foam, every now and then half-submerged under the breaking top of the great grey-green frothing rollers which lifted her, dropping with a squattering outwash of water in turmoil under her flanks as the sea passed onward. He measured, with experienced eye, the distance which separated them, awaiting the moment when she should be under his lee, his hand from time to time gesturing a touch of the helm to counter some great wave that threatened to fling the *Susquehanna* on to the wreck. Suddenly the semaphore on the bridge of the *Ocean Star* began to jerk its arms.

He turned to the second mate.

"What's she saying, Mr. Trent?"

The second mate frowned, with concentrated attention, at that gesticulating semaphore on the waterlogged derelict sagging down to them. Then he half-turned to the skipper.

"Woman aboard, sir!" he reported,

Captain Wilmott checked in the middle of a gesture to the helmsman. A woman! Everything seemed to stop in him. The semaphore continued its arm-jerked message. The second mate turned again.

"Says she won't come without captain. What do they mean, sir?"

Captain Wilmott flared at him in a sudden outburst of wrath that startled Mr. Trent out of his glib self-confidence.

"Never mind what they mean! Tell them they can go to hell altogether! Semaphore!"

The second mate, cowed under the furious eye of his superior, stepped obediently, without a word, to the semaphore, jerked out the arm.

Captain Wilmott's face was a study in frowning grimness. Then an ugly smile twisted his hard mouth.

"Stop!" he said. The semaphore had not spelt out its first word. "Tell them—tell them they can come together if they like!"

The two ships were almost beam to beam. It was the moment of opportunity. They wallowed in the frothing seas, perilously close. Captain Wilmott turned, shouted down to the mate amidships.

"Mr. Davidson! *Now!*" He gestured the signal to fire.

With a sizzling swish, heard for but an instant in the howl of the sound-swallowing gale, the rocket sped out, trailing a light line that fell clear across the *Ocean Star's* waist. A cluster of figures on her deck scrambled for it, seized it, hauled away, knee-deep in foaming water. A heavier line was attached to it.

On the bridge, Captain Wilmott manœuvred his ship with an infinite skill, holding her, now with a directing gesture to the helmsman, now with a touch upon the engine-room telegraph, in approximately the same position relative to the wreck. At every moment a raging, rushing wall of sea threatened to hurl them into collision. At

every moment a spasmodic churn of the *Susquehanna's* propeller, just keeping headway on her, a deft spin of the helm that shouldered the oncoming roller, averted the danger. Captain Wilmott's lips were grimly tight, but somewhere in him something kept repeating, with malicious exultation: "Come aboard, would they?" That superstitious inner self in him heard, yet reverberating, his blasphemous outburst to the mate. He endorsed it recklessly. Such a meeting was worth an eternity of damnation!

He glanced back to see a life-line rigged between the two ships, a breeches-buoy, sagging down to the smother of angry sea, in operation across the intervening space.

He could spare no attention to its occupant. Maintenance of the *Susquehanna's* position demanded the instant alertness of his whole intelligence. But he snapped out an order to the third mate.

"Tell the steward to get something hot in the saloon for the woman. Take Captain Buttevant in there too. Send the other officers into the engineers' mess. Tell Mr. Davidson to report when they are all aboard."

It seemed an endless time that he stood on that wet bridge baffling the eternal onrushes of the ravening sea, manœuvring to keep his safe distance from the *Ocean Star*, easing her as the life-line tautened, threatening to break, standing away as it slacked with a menace of drowning for the poor drenched wretch half-way to safety. He could not follow the process of rescue. He only noted that the breeches-buoy went slowly to and fro from ship to ship. At the back of his mind, a part of himself was pre-occupied with the enemy perhaps even then risking the perilous passage to an encounter of man to man. A fraction of that part remembered suddenly that his six-shooter was in his cabin. He wondered, with a nice appreciation of moral torture, what he was feeling like now—that Captain Buttevant? What was he—arrant coward or cynically brave? Well, he's had his warning, he thought—he knows what to expect. He thrilled, an inner self remote from that which conned his ship, with diabolical expectation of that meeting, face to face at last.

The first mate stood suddenly by his side.

"All aboard, sir," he reported.

Captain Wilmott looked round upon him.

"The captain as well?"

"Captain—and his lady, sir," said the stolid mate. "They're in the saloon."

It seemed to Captain Wilmott that he was uncannily calm in this moment of crisis so long anticipated.

"Very good," he said. "Put her back on her course, Mr. Davidson."

HE descended from the bridge, went into his cabin, slipped his revolver into his pocket, went down the second ladder to the deck.

He turned into the saloon, pushed open the door. At the farther end, a large-framed man was bending over a female figure of which he could only see the skirts. They did not notice his entrance. He halted, a hand on the revolver in his pocket.

"Captain Buttevant!" he said, his voice harsh in the human silence of the saloon. "I'll trouble you to stand away from my wife!"

The man swung round to him, startled. He was a tall, handsome fellow, despite the grey hairs of more than middle age. Captain Wilmott glared at him—glared from him to the woman. She was a matronly creature, double Gwen's years. He had never set eyes on her before.

Captain Buttevant spoke somewhat angrily.

"What in hell are you talking about?" Then, catching suddenly at a hint from the bewilderment in the other man's face, he added: "I'm not the only Buttevant in the world, you know!" He held out his hand. "I owe you great thanks, Captain Wilmott!"

A diabolic mockery taunted Captain Wilmott's superstitious soul as he stared at him.

"You can thank the Devil!" he said, harshly, and, as he said it, he raged against this fraudulent bargain. It was like the Devil to cheat!

The matronly woman rose and looked at him with what seemed comprehension. Possibly she knew his story. Sea-gossip travels far.

"No, Captain Wilmott," she said, earnestly. "We thank God—and perhaps you will yet—for a great escape."

THE SINISTER QUEST OF NORMAN GREYES

by

E·PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES CROMBIE

No. 11.—THE GREAT ELUSION.

By NORMAN GREYES.

IT was towards the close of a dinner-party at Kindersley Court, in Devonshire, where Janet and I were spending a fortnight, that our host suddenly directed the conversation to me.

"One has heard a great deal of your successes, Greyes, especially during your last few years at Scotland Yard. What do you count your greatest failure?"

"My inability to bring to justice the greatest criminal in Europe," I replied, after a moment's hesitation. "I had him on my book for three years, but when I retired he was still very much at large. We have been up against one another continually. Sometimes he has had the better of it; sometimes I. But the fact remains that, though there have been at least a dozen misdemeanours which might have been brought home to him, he has slipped out of our hands every time we have formulated even a nominal charge."

"Has he ever been in prison?" someone asked.

"Never," I replied. "Not only that, but he has never even been apprehended, never even brought before a magistrate."

"What is his name?" Lord Kindersley inquired, with some interest.

I smiled.

"A name with him, I suspect, is an affair of the moment. I have known him under a dozen different pseudonyms, but his real name is, I believe, Michael. He did me the honour to attend my wedding reception as Colonel Escombe."

I happened to meet the glance of Beatrice Kindersley as I looked across the table. She drew herself up for a moment, and I fancied that there was a steely glint in her very beautiful eyes.

"I met a Colonel Escombe there, whom I thought charming," she said, coldly.

"It was probably our friend," I assured her. "He is quite the most accomplished scoundrel in Europe."

"Sometimes," she remarked, "I think it would be interesting to hear how the goats talk of the sheep. I expect they would be able to find faults in the lives of the most perfect of us law-abiders."

"But tell us more about this man Michael," Lord Kindersley intervened. "I remember, seven or eight years ago, hearing something about the duel between you fellows at Scotland Yard and a wonderfully-led criminal gang. Where is the fellow now?"

"The answer to that question," I told him, "would bring you in about five thousand pounds in rewards, and possibly a bullet through your heart as an informer."

"You really couldn't lay your hand upon him at the present moment if you wanted to?"

I shook my head.

"I shouldn't have the faintest idea where to look for him. If he comes into the limelight again, my friend Rimmington at Scotland Yard will certainly send for me."

"And you would join in the hunt?" our host persisted.

"I am not sure," I admitted.

"You would do nothing of the sort," Janet interposed, looking across at me. "That is a promise."

I smiled back at her reassuringly. Prosperity and peace of mind had agreed with Janet. The dignity of wifehood sat well upon her. Her complexion seemed to have grown more creamy, her beautiful eyes

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softer, her carriage, always graceful, more assured. There was no woman in the county more admired than she—certainly no one less spoiled. She was absolutely and entirely contented with our simple country life. I sometimes think that, if she had had her way, she would never have wandered at all outside our little domain. More than once, when I had broached the subject, she had evaded the question of a visit to London or Paris, but, curiously enough, it was only at that moment that I realized the truth. She still feared Michael.

"There is just the one possibility," I remarked, "that I might not be able to evade the challenge. If I do not go after Michael, he may come after me."

IT was precisely at this moment that the amazing event happened. We were a party of twelve at dinner, seated at a round table in the centre of the large banqueting-hall of Kindersley Court. The room was rather dimly lit, except for the heavily-shaded lamps upon the table and the shaded electric lights over some of the old masters around the walls—lights which had been turned on during the meal at the request of one of the guests. The two footmen had left the room, presumably to fetch the coffee, and the butler, standing behind Lord Kindersley's chair, was the only servant in attendance. Suddenly every light in the place went out and we were plunged into the most complete darkness. Conversation was broken off for a moment, then there was the usual little medley of confused exclamations.

"Never knew such a thing happen before," our host declared, in an annoyed tone. "Somebody must have been tinkering with the power-house. Fetch some candles, Searle."

The butler turned to grope his way towards the door, but he was not allowed to reach it. A further sensation was in store for us. From various parts of the shadowy spaces on every side of us little pin-points of fire blazed out and steadily approached, without sound or movement. One of them came to a standstill immediately behind Lord Kindersley's chair. Wielded by some unseen hand, the dazzling brilliancy of a high-powered electric torch was flashed round upon twelve amazed faces. Then a strange voice broke the spellbound silence; a voice still and cold and perfectly modulated. Every word seemed to have the crispness of a pistol-shot.

"Ladies and gentlemen," the intruder said, "there is no need for any particular alarm. This is, to use a slang phrase, a 'hold-up.' If you all sit still and keep still and obey orders, you will be moderately safe. If anyone attempts to leave his chair or to strike a match, I, or one other of my four friends, will shoot. We have automatic pistols, and I trust that you will realize the absurdity of resistance."

"God bless my soul!" Lord Kindersley exclaimed. "Where are all my servants? How the devil did you get in?"

"It is scarcely policy to let you into the secret of our methods," the same cold voice continued, "but I have no objection to telling you that we came in through the front door, that your servants are locked up and guarded in the servants' hall very much as you are, that your telephone wires are cut, your electric light supply is in our hands, and the lodge gates are guarded. You ladies will kindly place all the jewellery you are wearing upon the table in front of you. There must be no delay, please, or any attempt at concealment. Madam," the voice continued, and there was something terrible in its menacing quality, the torch flashing at the same moment into the startled face of a woman on the opposite side of the table, "if you attempt to drop any of your jewellery upon the floor, or to conceal it in any way, you will force us to adopt measures which we should regret."

"What shall I do?" the woman next to me whispered, hoarsely. "I am wearing my emeralds—Jack implored me not to—they are worth a hundred thousand pounds."

"You will have to do as the others are doing," I told her. "The first act of this little drama must be played out according to orders."

She unclasped the necklace with trembling fingers, and the unseen figure behind Lord Kindersley's chair spoke again.

"Will it be Sir Norman Greyes who struts across the stage in the second act?" he asked, mockingly.

Then I knew who was there, and I remembered that Michael had sworn to take my life when and how the opportunity offered. I was an easy mark for him, sitting there, but somehow the idea of assassination never had any terrors for me.

"I may occupy the stage for a little time," I answered, feeling for my wine through the darkness. "But, after all, it will be the third act that counts. Which will you choose, I wonder, Michael—the gallows at Wandsworth Jail or the electric chair at Sing Sing?"

This, of course, was sheer bravado, a touch of melodrama of which I repented as soon as I had indulged in it. I heard the click of a weapon, and in the steady glare of that small circle of light I saw the flash upon its barrel as it drew level with my head. There was a silence as poignant as it was hysterical, then a cry

from Janet rang through the room. All this time the business of collecting the jewellery was proceeding without interruption.

"A familiar voice, I fancy," Michael said, coldly, as he lowered his weapon. "You do well to intervene, dear lady. Some day or other, I think that your husband will kill me or I him, but, unless he hunts me with a posse of policemen, it will be when we are both armed and the odds are even."

There was a little sobbing sigh from somewhere in the background. Then the silence was broken again in less dramatic fashion.

"May I speak, please?" Beatrice Kindersley asked.

INSTANTLY the light flashed upon her face. I was amazed at her composure. Her eyes were bright and sparkling and her cheeks full of colour. She had the air of being one of a vitally interested audience following the mazes of some fascinating drama. I heard the voice from the darkness answer her. It was no longer the voice I recognized.

"Say what you have to say as quickly as possible, please."

"I have put my rings and bracelets upon the table. I am wearing around my neck a miniature set with brilliants. It is not really very valuable, but it was left me by a relative. May I keep it?"

The light flashed for a moment upon the pendant which she seemed to be holding forward for examination, flashed on the little heap of her jewellery upon the table.

"Pray keep your miniature," the voice conceded. "Do me the further honour, if you will, of replacing your jewellery upon your fingers and your wrists. We are not here to rob children of their baubles."

Beatrice's laugh was a most amazing thing. It was perfectly natural and full of amused enjoyment.

"I don't like the reflection upon my jewellery," she complained. "However, since you are so generous I will accept your offer."

"Look here," Lord Kindersley exclaimed, finding a certain courage from his niece's complete composure, "is this a practical joke? Because, if so, it has gone d——d well far enough!"

"You will discover if it is a practical joke or not if you attempt to leave your seat!" was the instant reply.

"These fellows can't think they're going to get away with a thing like this," muttered Lord Harroden, the Lord Lieutenant of the county, from the other end of the table.

"Your lordship is mistaken," was the confident reply from the unseen figure who was directing the proceedings. "I will lay you five to one in hundreds that we do, payment to be made through the Personal Column of the *Times* in thirty days' time."

"Gad, he's a cool hand!" chuckled Anstruther, the Master of Hounds, who was seated next but one to me. "I wish I could see his face for a moment."

"It would be your last on earth if you did," he was promptly told.

"What if I strike a match?" a young man who was seated next to Beatrice Kindersley inquired.

"I should put it out with one bullet and you with the next," Michael assured him, grimly. "Now, ladies and gentlemen," he went on, after a brief pause, "our business seems to be over. Anyone who leaves his seat before we reach the door will be shot. As soon as we get there we shall lock you in, and then you can commence your part of the fun as soon as you like. If you care for suggestions, why not leave it to Mr. Anstruther to organize a midnight steeplechase, everyone to choose his own mount, motor-car, hunter, or bicycle. We sha'n't leave much of a trail, but for once in a while you'll be worrying something to death that can spit death back. Why don't you come and try? You'll all be welcome."

No one attempted a single word of reply. The little points of fire were kept turned upon us whilst our visitors slowly retreated. We heard the door unlocked, heard it slammed, heard it locked again—the signal for our emancipation. Very nearly simultaneously we all started to our feet. Two of the women were sobbing and shrieking. The woman whose emerald necklace had gone was the least discomposed of any.

"I wouldn't have missed this show for the world," she declared.

"I'm all for the steeplechase," Anstruther proposed. "Gad! that fellow would be worth hunting!"

"I'll sack every servant in the house," Lord Kindersley growled. "Curse them all, why doesn't someone come?"

Everyone was talking at once, without much result. We rang bells that made no sound, and battered at the door, a somewhat futile proceeding, as it was several inches thick. Someone found a box of matches and, illuminated by the fitful flame, the faces of the little company were a Holbein-like study. With the help of some chairs I mounted to the windows, but they were too narrow to allow the passage of even the slimmest of us. Finally Lord Kindersley groped his way back to the table from the sideboard with a fresh decanter of port in his hand.

"Dash it all," he exclaimed, "let's have

another glass of wine! I don't mind telling you that I'm shaking all over. It was like having the Lord High Executioner behind one's chair. His pistol was real enough, too. I felt it once against my neck. Ugh!"

Anstruther asked me a question from somewhere in the shadows.

"Greyes," he said, "you were speaking of a famous criminal, a man named Michael. You called that fellow——"

"That was the man," I told him.

The drama of it all was curiously poignant. We sat around in the match-lit darkness, talking in disjointed fashion, waiting until such time as the servants might find their way to our relief.

"Greyes seems to me to be the lucky man," Lord Harroden remarked. "He could have settled scores with you all right—potted you like a sitting rabbit any moment he wanted to."

"Quite true," I admitted, "but the one thing which has made the pursuit of Michael so fascinating is that he is the sort of man who would never shoot a sitting rabbit. He spoke the truth when he said that the end would come when one or the other of us was driven into a corner and both were armed. So far as I am concerned," I added, glancing across at Janet, "I am rather inclined to let it be a drawn battle. The hunting of men is a great sport, but the zest for it passes with the years."

Release came at last, another key to the apartment where we were imprisoned was found, the door was thrown open, and a stream of servants with lamps and candles entered. A few minutes of incoherent exclamations followed. It seemed that the servants' hall had been locked at both ends and guarded in the same way as the banqueting hall, the guests' bedrooms had been systematically ransacked, and it became clear that the marauders must have numbered at least fifteen or twenty. The orders which Lord Kindersley roared out were almost pitifully ineffective. In due course we discovered that the telephone wires had indeed been cut, that every motor-car in the garage had been rendered useless, the stables emptied, and every horse driven out into the park. We were seventeen miles from a market town and five miles from a village, and the moor, which stretched from the park gates, led across the loneliest part of England. The more we discussed it, the more we realized that it was, without a doubt, a most amazing *coup*.

NATURALLY the Press devoted a great deal of attention to a robbery of such sensational magnitude, and several journalists and photographers travelled down specially from London in search of material. The fact that I was one of the guests at Kindersley Court, and my wife amongst the victims of the robbery, gave a certain piquancy to the affair, of which the facile pens of some of my literary acquaintances took full advantage. Rimmington himself came down from Scotland Yard with two of his shrewdest assistants, but, as he acknowledged to me upon the third night after their arrival, the whole affair had been carried out with such amazing foresight that it seemed impossible to lay hold anywhere of a clue. A large reward was offered for the recovery of any portion of the jewels, the total value of which was estimated at something over two hundred thousand pounds, and every outlet from the country was carefully watched, but neither in Paris, London, nor Amsterdam was there the slightest movement amongst the known dealers in stolen gems. The little company of robbers seemed, indeed, to have driven away in their cars, and, within a mile and a half of the front door of Kindersley Court, to have vanished from the face of the earth. No shepherd upon the moors had seen them pass, none of the inhabitants of the small hamlets around had been awakened from their slumbers by the rushing through the night of those mysterious motors. Even Rimmington, who had more optimism than any man of my acquaintance in the profession, returned to London a saddened and disappointed man.

Janet and I stayed on at Kindersley Court for the last meet of the staghounds—a day which we are neither of us likely ever to forget. We motored over to Exford, where our host had sent all his available horses two days before. Janet, Beatrice Kindersley, and I were amongst those of the house-party who rode, Beatrice looking remarkably well on a fine Dartmoor-bred chestnut, a present from her uncle within the last few days. We had one short run and a great deal of waiting about. Early in the afternoon we found ourselves on the fringe of the hunt, on the southern slope of Hawksley Down. Below us, at the bottom of the coombe, hounds were being put through a thick jungle of dwarf pines, through which, if a stag were found, he was almost certain to make for Dooneley Barrow, on our right. Suddenly Beatrice, who had been looking over her shoulder, gave a little exclamation. A man, riding a dark bay horse, whom I had noticed once or twice always on the outskirts of the hunt, came round the side of a piled-up mass of stones and boulders, and rode straight up to us. I must confess that at first the incident possessed no significance for me. In his well-cut and well-worn riding clothes, and possessing the assured seat of a practised rider, there was nothing to distinguish this man from half-a-dozen of Lord

Kindersley's neighbours with whom we had exchanged greetings during the day. It was not, in fact, until he suddenly wheeled his horse round to within a yard or two of us, and I saw something glitter in his right hand, that I realized who he was.

"Norman Greyes," he said, "I call an armistice for five minutes. You will admit," he added, glancing downward at his right hand, "that I am in a position to call the game."

"Let it be an armistice, Michael," I agreed. "What do you want with me?"

"With you, nothing," he answered. "I came to speak to Miss Kindersley."

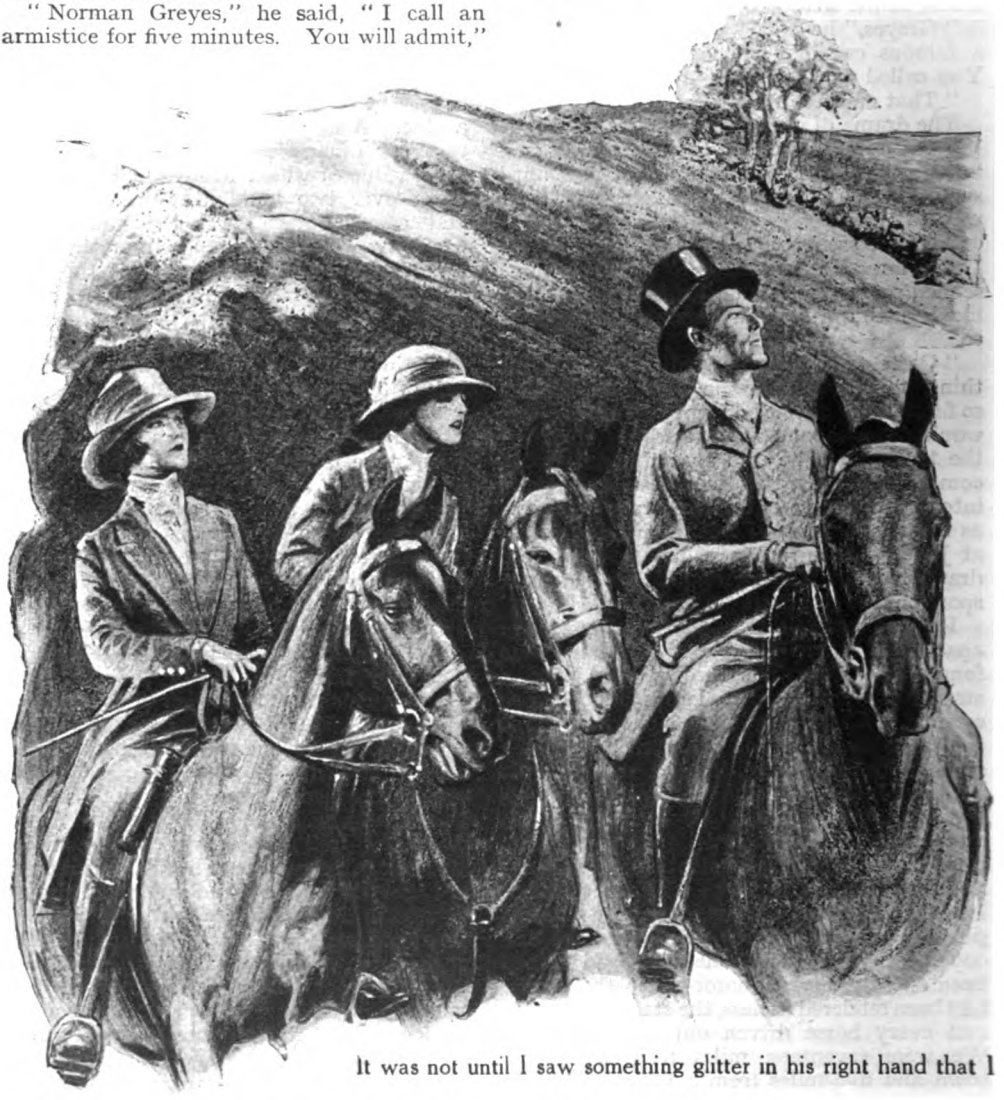
He looked full at Beatrice as he spoke, and his voice seemed for the moment to have gained a strange new quality.

"I find that my confederate misunderstood me the other night," he continued, "and that after all he took your jewellery from the table. I have stayed in the neighbourhood to return it."

He leaned over and placed a sealed box in Beatrice's hand. I could have sworn that I saw her fingers clutch passionately at his as he drew away.

"I knew that it was a mistake," she said, softly, looking across at him as though striving to call him back to her side. He kept his face, however, turned steadily away. His expression had changed. The old mocking smile was back upon his lips.

"Upon reflection, Janet," he continued, "especially when I considered the richness



It was not until I saw something glitter in his right hand that I

of our haul, I felt a certain impulse of distaste towards robbing you of your newly-acquired splendours. Permit me."

He handed her also a little packet. Then he backed his horse a few paces, but he still

"I will remember your message," I promised. "You realize, of course, that I shall report your being still in the neighbourhood?"

"If you did not," was the cool reply,

realized who he was. "Norman Greyes," he said, "I call an armistice for five minutes."

lingered, and I knew that he had something else to say.

"So our friend Rimmington has given up the chase and gone back to London," he observed. "Give him a hint from me some day. Tell him not to take it for granted that the first impulse of the malefactor is to place as great a distance as possible between himself and the scene of his misdemeanours. Sometimes the searching hand passes over what it seeks to grasp."

"the next few hours would be empty of interest to me. Even if you yourself take a hand in the game, Greyes—and I will do you the credit to admit that you are the cleverest of the lot—I promise you that I shall make my way to safety as easily as I shall canter across this moor."

He leaned towards me.

"Send the women on for a moment," he begged. "I have a word for you alone."

Janet turned her horse at once in obedience

to my gesture. Beatrice, however, lingered. She was gazing across at my companion. I saw their eyes meet, and it seemed to me a strange thing that such a look should pass between those two. Then I saw Michael shake his head.

"I must speak to Greyes alone," he insisted. "Every moment that I linger here makes my escape more difficult."

She turned and rode slowly after Janet, but reined in her horse scarcely twenty paces away. Michael rode up to my side. He had dropped his weapon back into the loose jacket of his riding-coat. He was at my mercy, and he knew it. Yet, rightly enough, he had no fear.

"Norman Greyes," he said, "this is the end of our duel, for I have finished with life as you and I understand life. Fate has made us enemies. Fate might more than once have given either of us the other's life. Those things are finished."

"You speak as though you were making a voluntary retirement—yet how can you hope to escape?" I asked him. "There is a price upon your head wherever you turn. Even though my day has passed, there are others who will never rest until they have brought you to justice."

"I am not here to speak about myself," he answered, indifferently. "I want a word with you about that girl."

"About Beatrice Kindersley?"

"Yes."

"What can you have to say about her?" I demanded, puzzled, although the memory of that look was still with me.

"Never mind. You know life, Greyes, although you walk on the wrong side of the fence. You know that the greatest of us are great because of our follies. That girl is the folly of my later life. There is a touch of romance in her, a sentiment—— For Heaven's sake, Greyes, don't sit and look at me like a graven image! Be a human being and say that you understand."

I remembered that look, and I nodded.

"I understand," I said. "Go on."

"Tell her, then, for the love of Heaven, who and what I am. Tell her that I have wives living, women whom I have deceived in every quarter of the globe. Tell her that a policeman's hand upon my shoulder would mean the gallows in England or the electric chair in America. Tell her what manner of life I have lived. Strip off the coverings. Show her the raw truth. Tell her that I am a criminal at heart from the sheer love of crime."

"I will tell her what you say," I promised.

"Damn it, man!" he answered, passionately, as he turned his head to windward for a moment and swung round his horse. "Tell her nothing from me, tell her from yourself! You know the truth, if any man does. Give her pain, if you must. Show her the ugly side. As man to man, Greyes, enemy to enemy, swear that you will do this."

"I swear," I answered.

He must have touched his horse with his whip, unseen by me, for the words had scarcely left my lips before he was galloping away, making for the loneliest and bleakest part of the moor. I heard a stifled cry from Beatrice, a cry that was almost a sob.

"Why did you let him go, Norman? I wanted to say good-bye!"

"He left some messages for you," I answered, a little grimly.

By MICHAEL

I LUNCHED one Sunday morning at the Café de Paris with my friend Gaston Lefèvre, the well-known insurance agent of the Rue Scribe—a luncheon specially planned to celebrate the winding-up of one of the greatest *coups* of our partnership. We had a table in the far corner of the restaurant, and we were able, by reason of its isolation, to speak of intimate things.

"You must now be a very wealthy man, my friend," Lefèvre said to me, a trifle enviously, for all Frenchmen worship money, "a very wealthy man indeed."

"I have enough," I answered. "As a matter of fact, that is one of the reasons why I have decided to levy no more contributions upon the fools of the world."

"You are not going to retire?" Lefèvre cried, in a tone of alarm.

"Absolutely," I assured him. 'I have burned all my boats in England, destroyed all ciphers, sealed up my secret places of refuge, and said good-bye to all my friends. I have said good-bye even to Younghusband, the cleverest rascal who ever successfully carried out the bluff of being a respectable Lincoln's Inn solicitor for over fifteen years. The rascal is actually getting new clients every week. Genuine clients, I mean. He is almost as wonderful as you."

"As for me," my companion confessed, sipping his wine, "my position has never been so difficult as yours. I have run no risks like you. I have never stolen a penny in my life, or raised my hand in anger or strife against any of my fellow-creatures."

I laughed softly. After all, the hypocrites of the world are amongst the essential things.

"You have made a million or so by those who have," I reminded him.

"Money which has been thoroughly well earned," was the confident reply. "Under the shelter of my name and position, many things have been rendered possible which

could not otherwise have been even attempted. Take this last business, for instance. Could you ever have smuggled a quarter of a million pounds' worth of jewellery out of the country without my aid ?"

"It is agreed," I assented. "In such matters you have genius."

M. Lefèvre waved his hand.

"It is a trifle, that," he declared. "Let us speak of yourself, my friend. You are in the prime of life, excitement is as necessary to you as his sweetheart to a Frenchman, or his golf to an Englishman. You have just brought off one of the finest *coups* which have ever been planned. A hundred and fifty thousand pounds to divide for the sale of these jewels, and not a single clue left behind. It was genius indeed. What is going to take the place of these things to you in life ?"

I shrugged my shoulders, for, indeed, I had asked myself the same question.

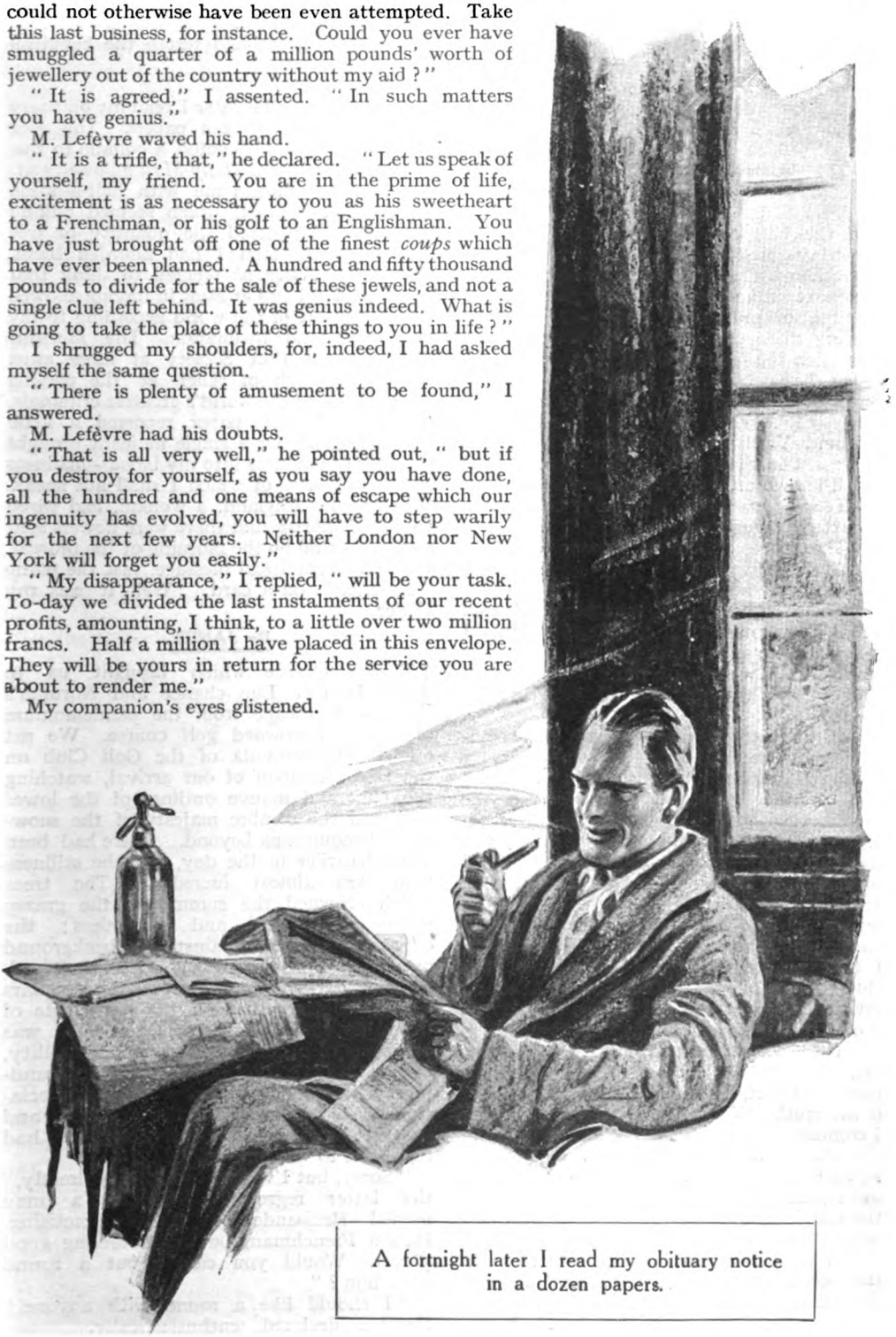
"There is plenty of amusement to be found," I answered.

M. Lefèvre had his doubts.

"That is all very well," he pointed out, "but if you destroy for yourself, as you say you have done, all the hundred and one means of escape which our ingenuity has evolved, you will have to step warily for the next few years. Neither London nor New York will forget you easily."

"My disappearance," I replied, "will be your task. To-day we divided the last instalments of our recent profits, amounting, I think, to a little over two million francs. Half a million I have placed in this envelope. They will be yours in return for the service you are about to render me."

My companion's eyes glistened.



A fortnight later I read my obituary notice in a dozen papers.

"It is a difficult matter, this, then, my friend?" he asked, anxiously.

"On the contrary, it will give you very little trouble indeed," I assured him. "You have, I think, amongst your other very useful connections, a friendly one with a certain French hospital. I will mention no names."

"That is, in a measure, true," M. Lefèvre assented, cautiously.

"Your task, then, is simple," I explained. "In the bag which I left at your office yesterday are clothes, jewellery, papers, and other trifles of apparent insignificance. The next unknown man who dies in the hospital, of my height and build, will be wearing these clothes, and will have in his possession the other trifles I have spoken of, which have been all carefully chosen to establish my identity. The authorities will notify the French and New York police, Scotland Yard, and the Press. You, also, will assist in making it publicly known that a well-known criminal has passed away."

"I see no difficulty," my companion admitted, thoughtfully.

"There is no difficulty," I assured him.

"And afterwards?"

I shook my head.

"There is no person breathing," I told him, "to whom I shall confide my plan. I am in no hurry. I think you will agree that for a certain length of time I could move about Paris without fear of being recognized."

"It is, without doubt, true," my companion assented, leaning back in his place and studying me thoughtfully. "I passed you on the boulevard and here, in the entrance, without a single impulse of recognition. I did not know you even when you spoke to me. You look precisely what I took you to be, an elderly Frenchman of good birth, retired from some profession, rather an elegant, something of a Boulevardier, nothing whatever of an Englishman. I tell you, Michael," my companion concluded, with some enthusiasm, "that no artist upon the stage or off it, in our day, is such a master of human disguise as you."

"I will not attempt to say that you flatter me, Lefèvre," I replied, "because, as a matter of fact, I believe that what you say is the truth. Very well, then, just as I am, I commence so much as may be left to me of the aftermath of life. Within a week I shall leave Paris. You may never see or hear of me again. On the other hand, I may feel the call. I make no rash promises or statements."

"It would interest me strangely to be in the secret of your whereabouts," Lefèvre persisted.

I shook my head, as I called for the bill.

"I have a fancy," I told him, "for stepping off the edge of the world. . . . Let us take a car and watch the beautiful women at Auteuil."

A FORTNIGHT later I read my obituary notice in a dozen papers. The *New York Herald* devoted a column to me, and the Continental *Daily Mail* followed suit. The *Times* dismissed me with half-a-dozen lines of small print, which seemed unkind when one considered the quantity of free sensational material I had afforded them. The *Daily Telegraph* seemed to think that Scotland Yard was at fault in having allowed me to slip out of the world according to my own time and inclination. The *Morning Post* thought that Society at large must breathe a sigh of relief at the passing away of one of the world's greatest criminals. Only one French paper reported a little incident which for a single moment brought the fires of madness into my blood—madness and a weakness of which I shall not speak. Someone in England, a woman, had wired to a Paris florist, and there were flowers sent to the hospital on the morning of the funeral, with no hypocritical message, just the name "Beatrice" on a card. Well, it was my choice.

By JANET.

IT was chance which brought us to St. Jean de Luz, chance and Norman's desire to escape from the pandemonium of an over-crowded golf course. We sat out on the veranda of the Golf Club on the late afternoon of our arrival, watching the pink and mauve outlines of the lower hills and the sombre majesty of the snow-capped mountains beyond. There had been a wind earlier in the day, but the stillness here was almost incredible. The trees which crowned the summit of the grassy slopes were silent and motionless; the cypresses beyond, against the background of the pink-fronted farmhouses they sheltered, seemed darker than ever; the poplars leading to the villas on the south side of the valley stood like silent sentinels. I was conscious of a curious sense of tranquillity, inspired a little, no doubt, by my surroundings. Norman, after a few words of appreciation, looked longingly at his golf clubs and suggested a game to the secretary, who had come out to welcome us.

"Sorry, but I've had two rounds already," the latter regretted. "There's a man named Benisande out there, practising. He's a Frenchman, but a thundering good player. Would you care about a round with him?"

"I should like a round with anyone," Norman declared, enthusiastically.

The secretary strolled across towards the man who was practising mashie shots on to the last green, a slim man with a slight but graceful stoop, silver-grey hair and clean-cut, weather-beaten features. He was dressed in tweed golf clothes of English fashion, and was attended by his own man-servant, who was carrying his clubs. He apparently accepted the secretary's suggestion with alacrity, and the two men came over to us at once. A few words of introduction were spoken, and we all made our way to the first tee. The Frenchman, discovering that Norman's handicap was the same as his own, insisted upon the latter taking the honour. Norman drove an average ball straight down the course—and then came the great moment. M. Benisande glanced curiously at us both, handed his cap to his servant, swung his club, and addressed the ball. I gave a little cry. Norman stood as though he were turned to stone. In that moment we had both recognized him. Unmoved, Michael drove straight and far up the course, and watched his ball for the length of its run. Afterwards, we three stood and looked at one another upon the tee. The secretary had disappeared in the club house, the caddies had already started after the balls; we were practically alone.

"This is an interesting coincidence," Michael remarked, with a smile that seemed to have lost all its cynicism. "Our acquaintance, Sir Norman, if I remember rightly, commenced with a game of golf at Woking."

"We thought that you were dead," I gasped.

Michael sighed.

"I took great pains to insure your thinking so," he declared. "It is my misfortune to have run up against the two people who were bound to recognize me. Still, I have had a very pleasant four years."

"Is it so long?" I murmured, for Norman seemed still incapable of speech.

"Four years and a few months," Michael continued. "It is a great deal to have snatched from a life which should have been ended. I have a charming little villa, a converted farmhouse—you can see it through the trees there; a delightful garden—my violets and carnations are famous, and there are very few English flowers which I have not managed to grow. I play a round of golf whenever I feel like it, and when the wander hunger comes I vanish up there into the Pyrenees. Antoine, my servant, is a Basque and an accomplished mountaineer. To-day I can follow him anywhere."

"What are we going to do about this?" Norman muttered.

"That remains with you," Michael replied.

WE started to walk slowly towards where the two balls were lying almost side by side. I passed my arm through my husband's and looked into his face. It was obvious that he perfectly well realized the crisis with which he had to deal. During the last four years—wonderful years they had been—we had spent scarcely more than a month or two in London. We had travelled in Italy and Egypt, wintered twice in the South of France, and the remainder of the time had been devoted to Greyes Manor. I had my two babies to look after, and Norman his farms. The ties which had bound him to his old profession had naturally weakened, yet I knew now how his mind was working. Here, by his side, was a man whom he had sworn to bring to justice, a notorious criminal, a man who by every code of ethics and citizenship he ought promptly to denounce. And I knew that, for some reason, he hated the task almost as much as I hated it for him. They drew near to their balls and Norman came to a standstill. He had arrived at his decision. I, at any rate, awaited it breathlessly.

"Michael," he said, "you shall have your chance. You know my duty. You know that I am a man who generally tries to do it. Yet, to be candid with you, I have a conviction that your career as a criminal is over, and my personal inclination is to leave you alone. We will let Fate decide it. We are as nearly equal at this game as two men can be. Fate made you my partner this evening. I will play you this round for your liberty and my silence."

I saw Michael's eyes glitter, and I knew that the idea appealed to him. He looked towards the green and swung his cleek lightly backwards and forwards.

"Let us understand one another," he insisted. "If I win, I am free of you for the rest of my life. If I lose, I am to face the end."

"If you lose," Norman said, "I shall send a telegram to Scotland Yard, and another to the Chief of the Police at Marseilles."

"The terms are agreed," Michael declared, taking up his stance. "My life against your bruised conscience."

So the match started. The first hole was halved in four, and from then onwards commenced a struggle which I can hardly think of, even now, without a shiver of excitement. Neither was ever more than two up, but towards the sixteenth hole I began to realize that another factor besides skill was at work. Norman topped his second shot, but jumped the bunker and lay upon the green. Michael carried the bunker with a perfectly-played mashie shot, but pitched upon a mowing machine

and came back to an almost unplayable place in the long grass. He had lost the hole. Norman, who was as nearly nervous as I have ever seen him, muttered something about bad luck, but his adversary only shrugged his shoulders. At the seventeenth hole Norman drove fairly well, but was still sixty yards short of the green. It was the old Michael who took his stand afterwards on the tee, hard and dogged. I saw his teeth gleam for a moment, and the whitening of the flesh around his knuckles as he gripped his club fiercely. He hit the most wonderful drive I have ever seen, long and low and straight. It carried on and on whilst we watched it breathlessly. Finally it ran on to the green and ended within a couple of clubs' length of the hole. I gave a little gasp of relief, for, from the first, I had prayed that my husband might lose. But I had reckoned without that unseen force. Norman topped his mashie shot, which bumped along the ground on to the green, passed Michael's ball, and to my horror dropped in the hole. Even Norman himself seemed to have no words. He stood looking at the spot where his ball had disappeared, his face averted from his opponent.

"Sorry," he said, gruffly. "My second fluke in two holes, I'm afraid."

Michael made no remark. He studied his putt long and carefully, hit it with a musical little click, and we all watched it run straight for the hole. At the last moment some trifling irregularity of surface seemed to deflect it, it caught the corner of the hole, swung round inside, and came out again. It rested on the very edge, and we stood there waiting. Nothing, however, happened. Michael turned away, and I fancied that I saw a little quiver upon his lips.

"We are now all square," he said. "I scarcely expected to lose the last two holes."

"I have been lucky," Norman admitted, a little brusquely, "but I can't help it. It might have been the other way."

At the eighteenth a strong wind was against them. Norman, pulling a little, escaped the bunkers, but Michael, hitting a far better ball, carried them with a few yards to spare. Norman played a fine second and reached the green, four or five yards from the hole. When Michael reached his ball I saw him stop and look at it. His servant gave an exclamation. It was lying where a huge clod of earth had been knocked away by some beginner and never replaced, without a blade of grass around it, and on a downward slope. I looked across towards my husband.

"It isn't fair," I whispered, hoarsely. "Move it with your foot. Norman can't see. Besides, I'm in the way."

Michael, who was choosing a club, just glanced up at me for a moment, and I felt as though I had said something sacrilegious.

"We don't play games that way," he rejoined, quietly. "I am afraid this is going to be rather a forlorn hope, though."

He took a niblick, but was only able to get about half-way to the green. This time, however, his ball was lying well.

"I play the odd," he murmured, as he selected a running-up cleek. We waited breathlessly for the shot. Norman's caddie and Michael's servant, although they had no idea, of course, of the significance of the match, had gathered from our tense air that it was of no ordinary interest. We all watched Michael's ball, when at last he played it, spellbound. It was a low shot, beautifully straight for the flag, and I could scarcely keep back a little cry of joy when I saw it land on the green and run slowly two or three yards past the hole.

"A fine recovery," Norman said, thickly. "My turn now to play the like."

He took his putter, and my heart sank as I saw him strike the ball well and firmly. For a moment it seemed as though he had holed it and the match was over. It came to a standstill about eighteen inches short.

"This for a half," Michael remarked, as he went towards his ball.

I saw him half close his eyes as he took up his stance, and I wondered for a moment what he was thinking of. He took the line carefully and struck the ball straight for the back of the hole. I gave a little gasp. It seemed as though the half were assured. Then a cry of dismay from Michael's caddie startled me. The ball, although it had seemed to hit the back of the hole, spun round and came out again. Again it lay within a foot or so of the hole. Michael stood quite still looking at it. He glanced up and our eyes met.

"The fates," he said, quietly, "are against me."

NORMAN took out his putter, and I scarcely dared to watch. He was only a few inches from the hole. The result seemed certain. Then, as I forced myself to watch him, a strange thought came to me. He seemed to be taking unusual care, but he was holding his putter differently and he seemed to have lost his confidence.

"This for the match," he said, looking across at his opponent.

"For the match," Michael repeated, hopelessly.

Norman struck the ball with a little stab and I could scarcely believe my eyes. It missed the hole, passing it on the left-hand side and coming to a standstill at least two

feet away. Norman looked down at the ground in a puzzled manner.

"This is the rottenest green on the course," he muttered. "Whose play, caddie?"

The caddie considered the matter for a moment and pointed to Michael. This time there was no mistake. The ball went well and truly to the bottom of the hole. Norman again surprised me. He studied his ridiculous

haps you deserved it. You had all the worst of the luck until my putting paralysis set in."

Michael took off his hat, and I saw great beads of perspiration upon his forehead.

"I am thankful for my win," he said, quietly, "but I scarcely expected it."

We all walked back to the club-house together.

"Janet and I will leave St. Jean de Luz at once," Norman announced.

Michael drove straight and far up the course, and watched his ball for the length of its run.

little putt with exaggerated care, brushed away some fancied impediment, and reproved his caddie sharply for talking. When he hit the ball he hit it crisply enough, but again with that little stab which drew it once more to the wrong side of the hole. There was a little murmur.

"I never saw such filthy putting in my life!" Norman exclaimed, looking exactly like a normal man who has lost an important match by a moment's carelessness. "Your match, Monsieur Benisande. I think per-

"It will not be necessary," Michael rejoined, quickly. "To-morrow I start for the mountains. I shall be gone for a week or more. I beg that you will not hurry your departure. May I speak to you for a moment, Janet?"

Norman made his way, without remark, to the club-house. He neither spoke to nor looked towards Michael again. Men are strange beings. This was the passing of the feud which left them both forsworn.

I spared Michael the question which I knew was upon his lips.

"Beatrice is well," I told him. "She is still unmarried."

There was a light in Michael's face which I pretended not to see. It was gone in a moment, and when he spoke his voice was quite steady.

"I am sorry to hear that she is unmarried," he said, "although no man in the world could be worthy of her. I am going to entrust you with a mission. If ever the truth concerning me should come to light, I want her to know this."

He drew from his pocket a letter-case of black silk with platinum clasps, a simple but very elegant trifle for a man. Out of it he drew what appeared to be its sole contents, a crumpled card, upon which was written, in Beatrice's handwriting, her own name. The card was smeared as though with the stain of crushed flowers.

"I planned my death," he continued, with a faint return to his old cynical smile, "very much as I have lived my life—with my tongue in my cheek. Then I read in some French paper that Beatrice had sent flowers to the hospital for my funeral, and I felt all the bitter shame of a man who has done an ugly thing. I made what atonement I could. After having reached absolute safety, I risked my life in almost foolhardy fashion. I attended my own funeral. I stole that card and one of the flowers from the grave. If ever she should learn the truth," he added, his face turned away towards the mountains, "I should like her to know that. She may reckon it as atonement."

I laid my hand upon his arm. Speech of any sort seemed to have become extraordinarily difficult. When I had found the words I wanted, Michael had gone.

THE last we saw of Michael was, in its way, allegorical. As we climbed one of the grassy slopes of the Golf Club on the following morning, we saw two men on the other side of the river, walking steadily away from us along the path which led across the lower chain of hills towards the mountains. They carried knapsacks on their backs and long staves in their hands. They had, somehow, at that distance, the air of pilgrims.

"There goes Benisande, off on one of his mountain expeditions," the secretary, who was playing with Norman, remarked, pointing them out. "They say that he has made up his mind to climb that farther peak beyond the Pass. Even the Basque guides call him foolhardy."

I watched the two figures. I waved my hand in futile farewell. But Michael never once turned back.

THE END.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 111.
(*The Third of the Series.*)

"I SEE thy beauty gradually unfold"—
The laureate and the lady here behold.

1. Sir Walter Scott of this "stern huntsman" wrote.
2. 'Tis "wrought by want of thought"—from Hood we quote.
3. "The wonder of the world," in Shakespeare's play.
4. Its "ancient wall" find in Macaulay's lay.
5. Moore tells us where "white jasmine flowers" have blown.
6. Longfellow's stream, "content to be unknown."
7. In Byron's verse read of his "death or flight."
8. Pope speaks of her as "still divinely bright."

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 111 *should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor,* THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on October* 11*th.*

To every light one alternative answer may be sent; it should be written at the side. At the foot of his answer every solver should write his pseudonym and nothing else.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 110.
(*The Second of the Series.*)

MEN cling to place; in *first* for *last*
They stick, when usefulness is past.

1. They measure what you cannot see,
And carriage free will guarantee.
2. In this, a princess comes to view;
An insect small is in it, too.
3. On ground forbidden prone to rush;
Though naught is in it, 'tis a crush.
4. Land where reversed is style behold,
By footgear strangely crossed of old.
5. Vain talk; a poet would appear
If stones enough were added here.
6. Not hard, as interposed; for you
From midshipman may take your cue.

QUIVIS.

1.	O	hm	S
2.	F	ant	A
3.	F	oo	L
4.	I	dumae	A
5.	C	hatte	R
6.	E	as	Y

NOTES.—Light 1.—Measuring electrical resistance. On His Majesty's Service. 2. Infanta, ant. 3. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," Pope; for instance, gooseberry fool. 4. Edom, mode; "Over Edom will I cast out my shoe," Psalm 60. 5. Chatterton; a ton is 160 stones. 6. Midshipman Easy.

TWENTIETH SERIES: RESULT.

Eight hundred and forty-eight solvers sent in answers to the first acrostic of the series; seven of them solved the whole set with entire correctness. These seven will divide the prizes, each winner's share being thirty-six shillings; they will also be disqualified from further success in the current series and the succeeding one. They are: Arden, Mr. R. W. Bates, R.N. College, Dartmouth; Cobweb, Mr. C. W. Cooper, Thornycroft, Mickleburgh Hill, Herne Bay, Kent; Forest, Mr. P. E. Herrick, 40, Arodene Road, Brixton Hill, S.W.2; Noluc, Mrs. R. M. Milne, Eggardun, Dartmouth; Peci, Mr. G. E. Matthews, 53, Stockwell Green, S.W.9; Yagnit, Mr. L. Tingay, 15, Cranbourne Road, Muswell Hill, N.10; Zyme, Mr. J. W. Pulsford, 107a, Brixton Hill, S.W.2.

ON A CHINESE SCREEN

by

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

ILLUSTRATED BY C. HOLLOWAY

The Author, well known as novelist and dramatist, is here doing something new. These pen-pictures—prose poems, many of them—each a perfect little work of art, written on a tour through China, are so vivid and alive that to read them is like walking by the traveller's side.

1.—THE PICTURE.

I DO not know whether he was a mandarin bound for the capital of the province, or some student travelling to a seat of learning, nor what the reason that delayed him in the most miserable of all the miserable inns in China. Perhaps one or other of his bearers, hidden somewhere to smoke a pipe of opium, for it is cheap in that neighbourhood and you must be prepared for trouble with your coolies, could not be found. Perhaps a storm of torrential rain had held him for an hour an unwilling prisoner.

The room was so low that you could easily touch the rafters with your hand. The mud walls were covered with dirty whitewash, here and there worn away, and all round on wooden pallets were straw beds for the coolies who were the inn's habitual guests. The sun alone enabled you to support the melancholy squalor. It shone through the latticed window, a beam of golden light, and threw on the trodden earth of the floor a pattern of an intricate and splendid richness.

And here to pass an idle moment he had taken his stone tablet and, mixing a little water with the stick of ink which he rubbed on it, seized the fine brush with which he executed the beautiful characters of the

Chinese writing (he was surely proud of his exquisite calligraphy, and it was a welcome gift which he made his friends when he sent them a scroll on which was written a maxim, glitteringly compact, of the divine Confucius), and with a bold hand he drew on the wall a branch of plum-blossom and a bird perched on it. It was done very lightly, but with an admirable ease ; I know not what happy chance guided the artist's touch, for the bird was all a-quiver with life and the plum-blossoms were tremulous on their stalks. The soft airs of spring blew through the sketch into that sordid chamber, and for the beating of a pulse you were in touch with the Eternal.

2.—THE STRIPLING.

He walked along the causeway with an easy, confident stride. He was seventeen, tall and slim, with a smooth and yellow skin that had never known a razor. His eyes, but slightly aslant, were large and open, and his full red lips were tremulous with a smile. The happy audacity of youth was in his bearing. His little round cap was set jauntily on his head, his black gown was girt about his loins, and his trousers, as a rule gartered at the ankle, were turned up to the knees. He went barefoot but for thin straw sandals, and his feet were small and shapely. He had walked since early morning along the paved causeway that wound its sinuous path up the hills and down into the valleys with their innumerable padi-fields, past burial grounds with their serried dead, through busy villages where maybe his eyes rested approvingly for a moment on some pretty girl in her blue smock and her short blue trousers, sitting in an open doorway (but I think his glance claimed admiration rather than gave it), and now he was nearing the end of his journey and the city whither he was bound seeking his fortune. It stood in the midst of a fertile plain, surrounded by a crenellated wall, and when he saw it he stepped forward with resolution. He threw back his head

boldly. He was proud of his strength. All his worldly goods were wrapped up in a parcel of blue cotton which he carried over his shoulder.

Now Dick Whittington, setting out to win fame and fortune, had a cat for his companion, but the Chinese carried with him a round cage with red bars, which he held with a peculiar grace between finger and thumb, and in the cage was a beautiful green parrot.

3.—HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S REPRESENTATIVE.

He was a man of less than middle height, with stiff brown hair *en brosse*, a little tooth-brush moustache, and glasses through which his blue eyes, looking at you aggressively, were somewhat distorted. There was a defiant perkiness in his appearance which reminded you of the cock-sparrow, and as he asked you to sit down and inquired your business, meanwhile sorting the papers littered on his desk as though you had disturbed him in the midst of important affairs, you had the feeling that he was on the look-out for an opportunity to put you in your place. He had cultivated the official manner to perfection. You were the public, an unavoidable nuisance, and the only justification for your existence was that you did what you were told without argument or delay. But even officials have their weakness, and somehow it chanced that he found it very difficult to bring any business to an end without confiding his grievance to you. It appeared that people, missionaries especially, thought him supercilious and domineering. He assured you that he thought there was a great deal of good in missionaries; it is true that many of them were ignorant and unreasonable, and he didn't like their attitude; in his district most of them were Canadians, and personally he didn't like Canadians; but as for saying that he put on airs of superiority (he fixed his pince-nez more firmly on his nose), it was monstrously untrue. On the contrary, he went out of his way to help them, but it was only natural that he should help them in his way rather than in theirs. It was hard to listen to him without a smile, for in every word he said you felt how exasperating he must be to the unfortunate persons over whom he had control. His manner was deplorable. He had developed the gift of putting up your back to a degree which is very seldom met with. He was, in short, a vain, irritable, bumptious, and tiresome little man.

During the revolution, while a lot of firing was going on in the city between the rival factions, he had occasion to go to the Southern General on official business connected with the safety of his nationals, and on his way through the yamen he came across three prisoners being led out to execution. He stopped the officer in charge of the firing party, and, finding out what was about to happen, vehemently protested. These were prisoners of war, and it was

barbarity to kill them. The officer—very rudely, in the consul's words—told him that he must carry out his orders.

The consul fired up. He wasn't going to let a confounded Chinese officer talk to him in that way. An altercation ensued. The General, informed of what was occurring, sent out to ask the consul to come in to him, but the consul refused to move till the prisoners, three wretched coolies green with fear, were handed over to his safe keeping. The officer waved him aside and ordered his firing squad to take aim. Then the consul—I can see him fixing his glasses on his nose and his hair bristling fiercely—then the consul stepped forward, between the levelled rifles and the three miserable men, and told the soldiers to shoot and be damned. There was hesitation and confusion. It was plain that the rebels did not want to shoot a British consul. I suppose there was a hurried consultation. The three prisoners were given over to him, and in triumph the little man marched back to the consulate.

"Damn it, sir," he said, furiously, "I almost thought the blighters would have the confounded cheek to shoot me!"

They are strange people, the British. If their manners were as good as their courage is great they would merit the opinion they have of themselves.

4.—THE SIGHTS OF THE TOWN.

I AM not an industrious sightseer, and when guides, professional or friendly, urge me to visit a famous monument I have a stubborn inclination to send them about their business. Too many eyes before mine have looked with awe upon Mont Blanc; too many hearts before mine have throbbed with deep emotion in the presence of the Sistine Madonna. Sights like these are like women of too generous sympathies: you feel that so many persons have found solace in their commiseration that you are embarrassed when they bid you—with what practised tact!—to whisper in their discreet ears the whole tale of your distress. Supposing you were the last straw that broke the camel's back. No, madam, I will take my sorrows (if I cannot bear them alone, which is better) to someone who is not quite so certain of saying so exactly the right thing to comfort me. When I am in a foreign town I prefer to wander at random, and if maybe I lose the rapture of a Gothic cathedral, I may happen upon a little Romanesque chapel or a Renaissance doorway which I shall be able to flatter myself no one else has troubled about.

But, of course, this was a very extraordinary sight indeed, and it would have been absurd to miss it. I came across it by pure chance. I was sauntering along a dusty road outside the city wall, and by the side of it I saw a number of memorial arches. They were small and undecorated, standing not across the way but along it, close to one another, and sometimes one in front of the other, as though they had been erected by no impulse of gratitude to the departed or of admiration of the virtuous but in formal compliment, as knighthoods on the King's birthday are conferred on prominent citizens of provincial towns. Behind this row of arches the land rose sharply, and, since in this part of the country the Chinese bury their dead by preference on the side of a hill, it was thickly covered with graves. A trodden path led to a little tower, and I followed it. It was a stumpy little tower, ten feet high perhaps, made of rough-hewn blocks of stone; it was cone-shaped and the roof was like a pierrot's hat. It stood on a hillock, quaint and rather picturesque against the blue sky, amid the graves. At its foot were a number of rough baskets, thrown about in disorder. I walked round, and on one side saw an oblong hole, eighteen inches by eight, perhaps, from which hung a stout string. From the hole there came a very strange, a nauseating odour. Suddenly I understood what the queer little building was. It was a baby-tower. The baskets were the baskets in which the babies had been brought; two or three of them were quite new, they could not have been there more than a few hours; and the string? Why, if the person who brought the baby, parent or grandmother, midwife or obliging

friend, were of a humane disposition and did not care to let the new-born child drop to the bottom, for underneath the tower was a deep pit, it could be let down gently by means of a string. A lively little boy came up to me while I stood there and made me

understand that four babes had been brought to the tower that morning.

There are philosophers who look upon evil with a certain complacency, since without it, they opine, there would be no possibility of good. Without want there would be no occasion for charity; without distress, for sympathy; without danger, for courage; and without unhappiness, for resignation. They would find in the Chinese practice of infanticide an apt illustration of their views. Except for the baby-tower, there would not be in this city an orphanage; the traveller would miss an interesting and curious sight, and a few poor women would have no opportunity to exercise a beautiful and touching virtue. The orphanage is shabby and bedraggled; it is situated in a poor and crowded part of the city, for the Spanish nuns who conduct it—there are but five of them—think it more convenient to live where they may be most useful; and, besides, they have not the money to build commodious premises in a salubrious quarter. The institution is supported by the work, lace and fine embroidery, which they teach the girls to do, and by the alms of the faithful.

Two nuns, the Mother Superior and another, showed me what there was to see. It was very strange to go through the whitewashed rooms, workrooms, playrooms, dormitories, and refectory, low, cool, and bare, for you might have been in Spain, and when you passed a window you half expected to catch a glimpse of the Giralda. And it was charming to see the tenderness with which the nuns used the children. There were two hundred of them, and they were, of course, orphans only in the sense that their parents had abandoned them. There was one room in which a number were playing, all of the same age, perhaps four, and all of the same size; with their black eyes and black hair, their yellow skins, they all looked so much alike that they might have been the children of a Chinese Old Woman who lived in a Shoe. They crowded round the nuns and began to romp with them. The Mother Superior had the gentlest voice I ever heard, but it became gentler still when she joked with the tiny mites. They nestled about her. She looked a very picture of charity. Some were deformed and some were diseased, some were puny and hideous, some were blind; it gave me a little shudder; I marvelled when I saw the love that filled her kind eyes and the affectionate sweetness of her smile.

Then I was taken into a parlour, where I was made to eat little sweet Spanish cakes and given a glass of manzanilla to drink; and when I told them that I had lived in Seville a third nun was sent for, so that she might talk for a few minutes with someone who had seen the city she was born in. With pride they showed me their poor little chapel with its tawdry statue of the Blessed Virgin, its paper flowers, and its gaudy, shoddy decoration, for those dear faithful hearts, alas! were possessed of singularly bad taste. I did not care; to me there was something positively touching in that dreadful vulgarity. And when I was on the point of leaving the Mother Superior asked me whether I would care to see the babies who had come in that day. In order to persuade people to bring them they gave twenty cents for every one. Twenty cents!

"You see," she explained, "they have often a long walk to come here, and unless we give them something they won't take the trouble."

She took me into a little anteroom, near the entrance, and there, lying on a table under a counterpane, were four new-born babes. They had just been washed and put into long clothes. The counterpane was lifted off. They lay side by side, on their

backs, four tiny wriggling mites, very red in the face, rather cross perhaps because they had been bathed, and very hungry. Their eyes seemed preternaturally large. They were so small, so helpless; you were forced to smile when you looked at them, and at the same time you felt a lump in your throat.

5.—MY LADY'S PARLOUR.

"I REALLY think I can make something of it," she said.

She looked about her briskly, and the light of the creative imagination filled her eyes with brightness.

It was an old temple, a small one, in the city, which she had taken and was turning into a dwelling-house. It had been built for a very holy monk by his admirers three hundred years before, and here in great piety, practising innumerable austerities, he had passed his declining days. For long after, in memory of his virtue, the faithful had come to worship, but in course of time funds had fallen very low, and at last the two or three monks that remained were forced to sell it. It was very dilapidated, and the green tiles of the roof were overgrown with weeds. The raftered ceiling was still beautiful with its faded gold dragons on a faded red; but she did not like a dark ceiling, so she stretched a canvas across and papered it. She needed air and sunlight, so she cut two large windows on one side. She very luckily had some blue curtains, which were just the right size. Blue was her favourite colour; it brought out the colour of her eyes.

Since the columns, great red sturdy columns, oppressed her a little, she papered them with a very nice paper which did not look Chinese at all. She was lucky also with the paper with which she covered the walls. It was bought in a native shop, but really it might have come from Sanderson's; it was a very nice pink stripe, and it made the place look cheerful at once. At the back was a recess in which had stood a great lacquer table, and behind it an image of the Buddha in his eternal meditation. Here generations of believers had burned their tapers and prayed, some for this temporal benefit or that, some for release from the returning burden of earthly existence; and this seemed to her the very place for an American stove. She was obliged to buy her carpet in China, but she managed to get one that looked so like an Axminster that you would hardly know the difference. Of course, being handmade, it had not quite the smoothness of the English article, but it was a very decent substitute. She was able to buy a very nice lot of furniture from a member of the Legation who was leaving the country for a post in Rome, and she got a nice bright chintz from Shanghai to make loose covers with. Fortunately, she had quite a number of pictures, wedding presents, and some even that she had bought herself, for she was very artistic, and these gave the room a cosy look. She needed a screen, and here there was no help for it, she had to buy a Chinese one; but, as she very cleverly said, you might perfectly well have a Chinese screen in England. She had a great many photographs in silver frames, one of them of a Princess of Schleswig-Holstein and one of the Queen of Sweden, both signed, and these she put on the grand piano, for they give a room an air of being lived in. Then, having finished, she surveyed her work with satisfaction.

"Of course, it doesn't look like a room in London," she said, "but it might quite well be a room in some nice place in England, Cheltenham, say, or Tunbridge Wells."

6.—THE ALTAR OF HEAVEN.

IT stands open to the sky, three round terraces of white marble, placed one above the other, which are reached by four marble staircases, and these face the four points

of the compass. It represents the celestial sphere with its cardinal points. A great park surrounds it, and this again is surrounded by high walls. And hither, year after year, on the night of the winter solstice, for then Heaven is reborn, generation after generation came the Son of Heaven solemnly

to worship the original creator of his house. Escorted by princes and the great men of the realm, followed by his troops, the emperor, purified by fasting, proceeded to the altar. And here awaited him princes and ministers and mandarins, each in his allotted place, musicians, and the dancers of the sacred dance. In the scanty light of the great torches the ceremonial robes were darkly splendid. And before the great tablet on which were inscribed the words: "Imperial Heaven—Supreme Emperor," he offered incense, jade, and silk, broth and rice spirit. He knelt and knocked his forehead against the marble pavement nine times.

And here, at the very spot where the viceregent of heaven and earth knelt down, Willard B. Untermeyer wrote his name in a fine bold hand, and the town and state he came from—Hastings, Nebraska. So he sought to attach his fleeting personality to the recollection of that grandeur of which some dim rumour had reached him. He thought that so men would remember him when he was no more. He aimed in this crude way at immortality. But vain are the hopes of men. For no sooner had he sauntered down the steps than a Chinese caretaker, who had been leaning against the balustrade, idly looking at the blue sky, came forward, spat neatly on the spot where Willard B. Untermeyer had written, and with his foot smeared his spittle over the name. In a moment no trace remained that Willard B. Untermeyer had ever visited that place.

7.—THE OPIUM DEN.

On the stage it makes a very effective set. It is dimly lit. The room is low and squalid. In one corner a lamp burns mysteriously before a hideous image, and incense fills the theatre with its exotic scent. A pig-tailed Chinaman wanders to and fro, aloof and saturnine, while on wretched pallets lie stupefied the victims of the drug. Now and then one of them breaks into frantic raving. There is a highly dramatic scene where some poor creature, unable to pay for the satisfaction of his craving, with prayers and curses begs the villainous proprietor for a pipe to still his anguish. I have read also in novels descriptions which made my blood run cold. And when I was taken to an opium den by a smooth-spoken Eurasian, the narrow, winding stairway up which he led me prepared me sufficiently to receive the thrill I expected. I was introduced into a neat enough room, brightly lit, divided into cubicles the raised floor of which, covered with clean matting, formed a convenient couch. In one an elderly gentleman, with a grey head and very beautiful hands, was quietly reading a newspaper, with his long pipe by his side. In another two coolies were lying, with a pipe between them which they alternately prepared and smoked. They were young men, of a hearty appearance, and they smiled at me in a friendly way. One of them offered me a smoke. In a third, four men squatted over a chess-board, and a little farther on a man was dandling a baby (the inscrutable Oriental has a passion for children) while the baby's mother, whom I took to be the landlord's wife, a plump, pleasant-faced woman, watched him with a broad smile on her lips. It was a cheerful spot, comfortable, home-like, and cosy. It reminded me somewhat of the little intimate beer-houses of Berlin, where the tired working man could go in the evening and spend a peaceful hour. Fiction is stranger than fact.

8.—DAWN.

It is night still and the courtyard of the inn is rich with deep patches of darkness. Lanterns throw fitful lights on the coolies busily preparing their loads for the journey. They shout and laugh, angrily argue with one another, and vociferously quarrel. I go out into the street and walk along, preceded by a boy with a lantern. Here and there behind closed doors cocks are crowing. But in many of the shops the shutters are down already and the indefatigable people are beginning their long day. Here an apprentice is sweeping the floor, and there a man is washing his hands and face. A wick burning

in a cup of oil is all his light. I pass a tavern where half-a-dozen persons are seated at an early meal. The ward gate is closed, but a watchman lets me through a postern, and I walk along a wall by a sluggish stream in which are reflected the bright stars. Then I reach the great gate of the city, and this time one half of it is open ; I pass out, and there, awaiting me, all ghostly, is the dawn. The day and the long road and the open country lie before me.

Put out the lantern. Behind me the darkness pales to a mist of purple and I know that soon this will kindle to a rosy flush. I can make out the causeway well enough, and the water in the padi-fields reflects already a wan and shadowy light. It is no longer night, but it is not yet day. This is the moment of most magical beauty, when the hills and valleys, the trees and the water, have a mystery which is not of earth. For when once the sun has risen, for a time the world is very cheerless, the light is cold and grey like the light in a painter's studio, and there are no shadows to diaper the ground with a coloured pattern. Skirting the brow of a wooded hill I look down on the padi-fields. But fields is too grandiose a name to give them. They are for the most part crescent-shaped patches, built on the slope of a hill, one below the other, so that they can be flooded. Firs and bamboos grow in the hollows as though placed there by a skilful gardener with a sense of ordered beauty to imitate formally the abandon of Nature. In this moment of enchantment you do not look upon the scene of humble toil, but on the pleasure gardens of an emperor. Here, throwing aside the cares of State, he might come in yellow silk embroidered with dragons, with jewelled bracelets on his wrists, to sport with a concubine so beautiful that men in after ages felt it natural if a dynasty was destroyed for her sake.

And now with the increasing day a mist arises from the padi-fields and climbs half-way up the gentle hills. You may see a hundred pictures of the sight before you, for it is one that the old masters of China loved exceedingly. The little hills, wooded to their summit, with a line of fir trees along the crest, a firm silhouette against the sky —the little hills rise behind one another, and the varying level of the mist, forming a pattern, gives the composition a completeness which yet allows the imagination ample scope. The bamboos grow right down to the causeway, their thin leaves shivering in the shadow of a breeze, and they grow with a high-bred grace so that they look like groups of ladies in the Great Ming dynasty resting languidly by the wayside. They have been to some temple, and their silken dresses are richly wrought with flowers, and in their hair are precious ornaments of jade. They rest there for a while on their small feet, their golden lilies, gossiping elegantly for do they not know that the best use of culture is to talk nonsense with distinction ; and in a moment, slipping back into their chairs, they will be gone. But the road turns, and my God, the bamboos, the Chinese bamboos, transformed by some magic of the mist, look just like the hops of a Kentish field. Do you remember the sweet-smelling hop-fields and the fat green meadows, the railway line that runs along the sea, and the long shingly beach and the desolate greyness of the English Channel ? The sea-gull flies low over the pale and tranquil sea, and the melancholy of its cry is almost unbearable.

9.—ARABESQUE.

THERE in the mist, enormous, majestic, silent, and terrible, stood the Great Wall of China. Solitarily, with the indifference of Nature herself, it crept up the mountain-side and slipped down to the depth of the valley. Menacingly, the grim watch-towers, stark and four-square, at due intervals stood at their posts. Ruthlessly, for it was built at

the cost of a million lives and each one of those great grey stones has been stained with the bloody tears of the captive and the outcast, it forged its dark way through a sea of rugged mountains. Fearlessly, it went on its endless journey, league upon league, to the furthermost regions of Asia, in utter solitude, mysterious like the great empire it guarded. There in the mist, enormous, majestic, silent, and terrible, stood the Great Wall of China.

We are asked to state that these sketches, with others of the same character, will shortly appear in a volume entitled "On a Chinese Screen," by W. Somerset Maugham, to be published by Wm. Heinemann.

LOVEDAY'S SECRET

by

L. J. BEESTON

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN CAMPBELL

LOVEDAY'S nervousness, which had been very apparent during dinner, found audible expression when he had brought his three friends into his little private den away from the dining-room.

"Gentlemen," said he, forcing speech, "I have asked you here this evening with a special object; I might say—a most unusual object. I have had something on my mind for a long time. I want to tell you what it is, and I want your advice in a matter which is one of the most difficult that you could possibly imagine."

"Good iron, Loveday," said Forbes, flippantly. "A problem spiked all over with perplexities. I am your man, for one."

"But is an excellent dinner the best introduction?" queried Trant.

The third guest, Denvil, stretched out his long legs comfortably. "Drone away, Loveday," he encouraged. "Get it all off your thorax."

The last speaker had the divan chair left of the fire, and Trant had the divan chair right of the fire. Forbes leaned against the mantelpiece, smoking a cigarette in the longest amber tube in London.

"I am glad you take it easily," answered Loveday. His nervousness had gone, but it was replaced by anxiety. He drew up a chair at some little distance from his friends, and leaned forward in it, hands clasped, looking at his carpet. He was a bachelor of full middle age, with scanty reddish hair carefully brushed, pale eyelashes, a girlish voice, a too-kind heart, and had never had an enemy—or would have.

"The trouble came to me nearly a year ago," he continued, in a subdued tone. "I will confess that it has made me exceedingly unhappy. I do not know if you, or my other friends, have noticed a change in me, but I feel a great change in myself. By a mere accident I came into possession of a secret which I believe I am wholly unfitted for. It has become such a burden that I made up my mind to impart it. Perhaps I am taking a wrong course, but I cannot help it. I have many friends—no man more; but I have chosen you because you are typical men of the world whose counsel is certain to be sound, and also for another reason—which I will explain in a minute or two."

This was flattering, but rather more serious. Denvil screwed in his monocle; Trant raised his eyebrows and looked at the lowered head; Forbes readjusted his amber tube.

"The queer thing happened when I was staying over a week-end at a friend's house," went on Loveday. "The name of that friend is the one thing I cannot, in any circumstances, mention; and that leaves it very general and open, for, as you know, I am a constant guest at a great many houses.

"One beautiful moonlight night someone suggested a walk after dinner. I remained indoors, for I was feeling more than a twinge of rheumatism. I was on the way to my room to fetch a book which I had brought with me, when I was startled by a sharp thud in another room which I was passing. With a thought of burglars in my mind I opened the door of that room and switched on the light, when the cause of the noise was at once apparent: a picture had dropped from the wall.

"Would to Heaven I had left it where it

fell! Instead, I picked it up and saw that the shock had brought away a section of wood at the back. A paper was protruding from the opening. I had the curiosity to open and look at this paper. It was a certificate of marriage.

"And as I commenced to examine the certificate, the fear, the cruel weight which has been burdening me since, got hold of me. After long consideration I put down a rough copy of the document, replaced the original, adjusted the section of wood, and hung the picture, after repairing the cord, in its former position."

The narrator paused, for agitation had robbed him of breath. He did not look up at the others, who waited in silence.

"I will plunge straight into the situation," continued Loveday, getting a grip of himself. "It was the certificate of a marriage which had been performed in—in another country. Now, my good friend whose hospitality I was enjoying had inherited his fortune from a relative. I have got to be careful to avoid details; yet one detail I must mention, and it is that the relative died without making a will.

"I think you will now begin to perceive the gravity of the situation. I had apparently discovered an early and a secret marriage. The wife might be alive, or there were possibly children of the marriage; but all at once there rushed upon me the fear that my host and friend was in possession of a property to which he might have no legal right."

Denvil shot in—"No business whatever of yours."

"Quite true, but let him speak," said Trant.

"Rather! Why, this is great!" chuckled Forbes, delightedly.

"No, it did not appear to be my business" Loveday acquiesced. "But it depressed me exceedingly during the remainder of my stay. I felt unable to look my host in the face. Was it possible that a word from me might turn his life upside down, as it were?" The narrator pressed a hand against his forehead. "The truth is, gentlemen, that I was the last man in the world fitted to be haunted by such a secret. I am not by nature or health constituted for it. I told myself hundreds of times that it was not my concern. I made repeated efforts to forget it, but without avail, and after a time they seemed to me to be dishonest efforts. I suppose I thought far too much about it; at any rate, think and think about it I did until I asked myself the straight question—did my duty point to silence or speech?

"I resolved upon a middle course; I would investigate the matter. Perhaps there was nothing in it after all; and hugging this most earnest hope I went abroad, to the Continent, to make my own private inquiries. My copy of the certificate was an absolute guide. I found the district, the village, the church; turned up the formal register. The

I had the curiosity to open and look at this paper. It was a certificate of marriage.

marriage was inscribed there. I did not stop. My investigations discovered—first, the grave of the woman of the secret marriage, and, second, two children of the union, a young man and a girl a year his junior, both of the peasant class, both poor. I returned to England with my secret intact, and with my anxiety redoubled.

"Gentlemen, beyond a doubt those two children of the dead man whose fine property my nameless friend has stepped into are the true possessors of it by law. Why the marriage was kept secret does not concern us, and we have little to do with the eccentricity that made the husband retain and conceal the certificate in the place he chose. It is a sterner fact that stares us in the face."

There was a silence. It extended; it deepened. Loveday, seemingly expecting a remark, looked up. His guests' eyes were fixed steadily upon him, and they were motionless as statues.

Loveday got up, uneasy under the scrutiny. He said, timidly:—

"You will ask—why did I not approach my friend himself, tell him what I knew, and so rid myself of responsibility by placing it upon the shoulders most fitting to receive it? My answer is that I felt I should really leave him no option of choice. You see, he would know that *I* knew. Whatever course he might have pursued if the secret had been his alone I cannot tell, but with me looking on, a sense of honour—even decency—would forbid him to tear up the marriage certificate and say, 'This matter shall be buried for ever; I have the money, and I mean to keep it.'

"On all this I reflected for many long weeks. I suppose the world will say that I was very foolish to take the affair to heart, but I *did* take it to heart. Finally, it interrupted my peace of mind, my studies, so much that I decided to lay the question before others. You, gentlemen, are in ignorance of the name which is uppermost in my thoughts; but I want you to imagine yourselves in my position, and advise me. Shall I speak, or shall I remain silent? If your opinion is unanimous, I will abide by it."

LOVEDAY resumed his seat, and heaved a sigh of relief. Still no one spoke; still they steadily regarded him in a tense silence. Loveday became restless under it; he fidgeted; he glanced timidly from one to the other.

Suddenly Forbes drawled:—

"I say, Loveday, is it one of us?"

The question was hardly spoken before Denvil leaped to his feet, his monocle flying to the length of its cord.

"Dammit! No—no! You are not to ask that question!" he shouted.

"But unless I am under the influence of a powerful dream, it has already been asked," said Trant, sardonic and grim.

"Then I forbid you to reply to it, Loveday!" flashed Denvil, savagely. "Mind, not a word, man! Not a hint!"

"All right, Denvil," said Loveday, sadly.

Forbes drawled: "Question taken back—root and branch."

"Ah, but it is too late, too late," Trant growled. "Your question, young man, has ignited the powder. If Loveday was not speaking of one of us he would have put out the blaze by a word of denial. He does not speak it. So, so. The mischief is done; this possessor of property which belongs to others is one of us three men. Loveday, do you say 'no'?"

Loveday wiped his perspiring forehead. "I have been forbidden to answer," he stammered.

"That's good enough," said Forbes. 'One of us it is."

"You idiot, Loveday!" snarled Denvil. "You might have known it would have occurred to us."

"The next question," drawled Forbes, "is which one——"

"No—no—no, Loveday! Not a word!" roared Denvil, screwing in his eyeglass and glaring at Loveday menacingly. "If you had approached the man privately it would have been different. Your damned secret must not be shared by us all. You hear me? Not a whisper."

"All right, Denvil," repeated Loveday, terribly unnerved.

Trant held up a hand. "Do you mind if I take the floor?" he requested, calmly. "We have got to proceed carefully here. We are on very thin ice. Loveday, you have said enough—too much—far, far too much, in the opinions of us all; so now, for Heaven's sake, hold your tongue."

Trant got up while speaking, and Forbes dropped lazily into the vacated chair. Trant walked about, talking all the time.

"Let us get a proper focus," said he. "Loveday has implied by his silence that the man is one of us. Loveday has undoubtedly stayed at each of our places. There are acquaintances of his with whom he has spent no week-end, and it would have been better if he had chosen such for his confidants. On the other hand, we can understand his not doing so, doubtlessly judging that men who had been his host would regard the problem with a truer feeling, and therefore give the wisest counsel. The mistake he made was in including the man in this present trio. That was foolish, though all would have been well if Forbes had not asked the embarrassing question, and so upset all the fat over all the fire."

" Sorry," said Forbes, laconically.

" We have all three inherited most of our money," continued Trant. " Doubtless, again, that was why Loveday asked us—wanting, as I say, a feeling verdict."

" It was, indeed, the second of the two reasons I spoke of," cut in Loveday.

" Hold your tongue," snapped Trant again. " And each of us came into his little bit through lack of a will to the contrary. Perhaps, after all, Loveday *was* rather narrowed in his choice of three confidants, for, extensive though his list of friends is, yet he cannot know so very many who have found money that way. So far, so good—or, rather, bad. Very fortunately he has not let slip any family details that can make one of us think ' I am the man.' As he remarked, he has left the question very general and open. He did not even name any particular picture or any particular room ; and I am sure none of us will have all the pictures down ! You, Forbes, may be the man ; so might Denvil ; so might I. Now, my advice to Loveday, to you fellows, and to myself, is this : drop the matter like a white-hot bar ! Away with it absolutely ! For, as neither of us *knows* that he is the man concerned, we can with perfect honesty maintain a lifelong silence. What do you say, Denvil ? "

" Unquestionably I agree," answered Denvil, instantly.

" Forbes ? "

" I bow to your decisions, most wise and reverend seigniors."

" Right ! So now, Loveday, you have the advice—a unanimous advice—that you asked for. You are to put the matter from your mind from to-night."

" You may trust me," said Loveday, meekly.

" And so," said Forbes, rising, " the meeting does not break up in most admired disorder."

" Not at all," replied Trant. " In perfect accord. Loveday, kindly unchain your whisky and soda."

WHEN Trant, six months later, received from Denvil an earnestly-worded request to visit him in his rooms at nine o'clock one evening, he went to the rooms, which were over a gun-shop in Regent Street, and found Forbes and Loveday there. They had arrived ten minutes before him.

At once Trant thought of the subject of the former meeting—if he had ever for a single day forgotten it ; and he guessed, with rather a sinking at his heart, that the matter had turned up again. He was not " disappointed."

" Sit down, Trant," invited Denvil, moodily. " Forbes and Loveday got here before you. We have met for a consultation. To go straight to the subject, Loveday, by what I must call his cursed noseyness, has completely unsettled me."

" I see that he has. You look far from well."

" And Forbes, for all his seeming lightness of heart, feels the strain. And you, Trant ? Are you any happier for a sneaking fear that you are lying on a bed which may not be your bed, and from which some flicker of chance, by letting out the truth, may bundle you neck and crop ? Do you like this sensation ? "

" It would be odd if he did," laughed Forbes.

" I admit that it is most depressing," allowed Trant. " But—— "

" Oh, Denvil has an idea that lights up all Regent Street," interrupted Forbes.

" Indeed ? " said Trant, sceptically. " Why, what idea can possibly help us out of this barbed-wire entanglement ? "

" You shall hear," answered Denvil. " Have a cigar. Listen carefully. First and foremost, the peculiar circumstances of the case forbid that one of us should act without the others knowing. Now, I have come to the conclusion that since two of us here have a perfect right—if Loveday's investigations are correct—to a full enjoyment of their property, it seems exceedingly hard that those two should pass the remainder of their lives under a black cloud—a sort of impending sword."

" What my landlady would call the sword of Dammycoles," said Forbes.

" I heartily agree with you, Denvil," assented Trant at once. " Why should we all suffer ? On the other hand, it would be most unpleasant if three of us—that includes Loveday—should know the name of the luckless fourth. Loveday has no *right* to make his secret such comparatively common property. Suppose—as he well might—that the luckless fourth determined to keep quiet, to stick to his fortune, to destroy the marriage certificate ? We should not, of course, order him to make a clean breast of it. We could not say to him, ' Call in your solicitor and sacrifice all your property.' But he would certainly feel that he stood real bad in our eyes ; he would for ever have a wretched idea that we regarded him as an impostor—to say nothing that he would always dread that one of us might by chance let slip the truth. And this feeling would probably influence his judgment, would force his hand, would make him abandon his fortune—a lifetime of every comfort. It would not be fair, and I don't like the notion."

" Please do not ask me to agree to it," said Loveday, sadly.

"Trant," said Denvil, with strong emphasis, "you have put your finger right on the sore spot which Loveday's lack of diplomacy and Forbes's indelicate question have created. The truth has got to be told, and yet it must not be property common to the rest. Now, how can that be managed? Only by unusual tact, obviously."

"Wanted—a formula," chuckled Forbes.

Denvil continued, choosing his words with extreme care: "We might ask Loveday to go privately to the party concerned and to say to him, 'The beastly thing happened at *your* house.' But that would not do. The rest of us would know it because Loveday didn't come to *us*. But there is a neat way out of the deadlock. We have been discussing it, and here it is.

"In that desk in the corner are envelopes and paper. Loveday is to write on two slips the words 'You are not the man.' And on a third slip he will write 'You are the man involved.' Loveday will then hand each one of us a slip, in an envelope, giving the unlucky message to the right person. You will see that by all three of us observing a neutral and discreet bearing, and by promising never to allude to the subject again from that instant, then that two of us will leave this room relieved of a miserable burden, and that those two *will never know who the man is.*"

"That," cried Forbes, "is what I call a brainy wheeze."

Denvil continued, lucidly: "That one among us who gets the unlucky message has only to keep a stiff upper lip in order to guard his secret. He will then have the sound advantage of choosing his line of conduct unbiased."

"The subject must indeed be forbidden from the very moment that Loveday hands us the notes," said Trant, reflectively.

"We are men of honour," said Denvil, simply.

"I see, I see," added Trant, slowly. "Two of us will go from here with lightened hearts, and neither of those two will know who is up against the mischief."

"Exactly," Denvil insisted; "and the third will be free to choose his line of conduct uninfluenced by criticizing eyes—and that is a great point gained in an affair of such extreme delicacy."

"But Loveday will always know."

"Loveday is different. He will retire into his shell. He came to us for advice, and this is our advice. You are a dear old boy, Loveday, and no one is afraid of you."

Loveday sighed. "I asked for your counsel, and I am sure I am ready to accept it," he said, miserably. "But I will ask you to think once more before it is too late. Your idea, if carried out, will make one of you unhappy, and I shall be the cause. I thought your former verdict was definite, and now you change it."

"We all change it," answered Denvil, candidly. "We are all ready to take the chance. Now, Loveday, will you kindly go to that desk, turn away from us, and prepare the slips?"

Loveday shook his head sadly, got up, and seated himself at the writing-desk.

"For God's sake make no mistake!" urged Trant.

"I shall make no error," said Loveday, a deep line of anxiety across his forehead.

"I am sure you will not," said Denvil. "Come, you fellows, suppose we look out of the window until Loveday is ready?"

THEY drew aside and stared down at the lights in Regent Street. They heard the rustling of paper, the faint scratching of a pen. It was a minute with a thrill; before it had passed one of the three men must sustain a very heavy blow, and sustain it without turning a hair.

"Reminds me of the time I first backed a horse," whispered Forbes. "It lost."

"I am ready, gentlemen," said Loveday, in a burdened tone.

They at once faced him. With trembling hands Loveday handed an envelope to each of the men. They opened simultaneously, and drew out the enclosed slip.

"Right-o!" said Forbes, carelessly, thrusting paper and envelope into a trouser pocket.

"Very well," said Trant, with perfect calmness.

"So ends the discussion—for ever," said Denvil, evenly.

The only one discomposed was Loveday himself, who had turned white as a sheet. They respected his emotion, which they knew was caused by his bringing immense trouble into one of their lives.

There was a short and embarrassed silence, each man avoiding the others' eyes.

"I move that the meeting break up," said Trant, quietly. "Denvil, I will say good night."

"So long, Denvil," said Forbes, following Trant.

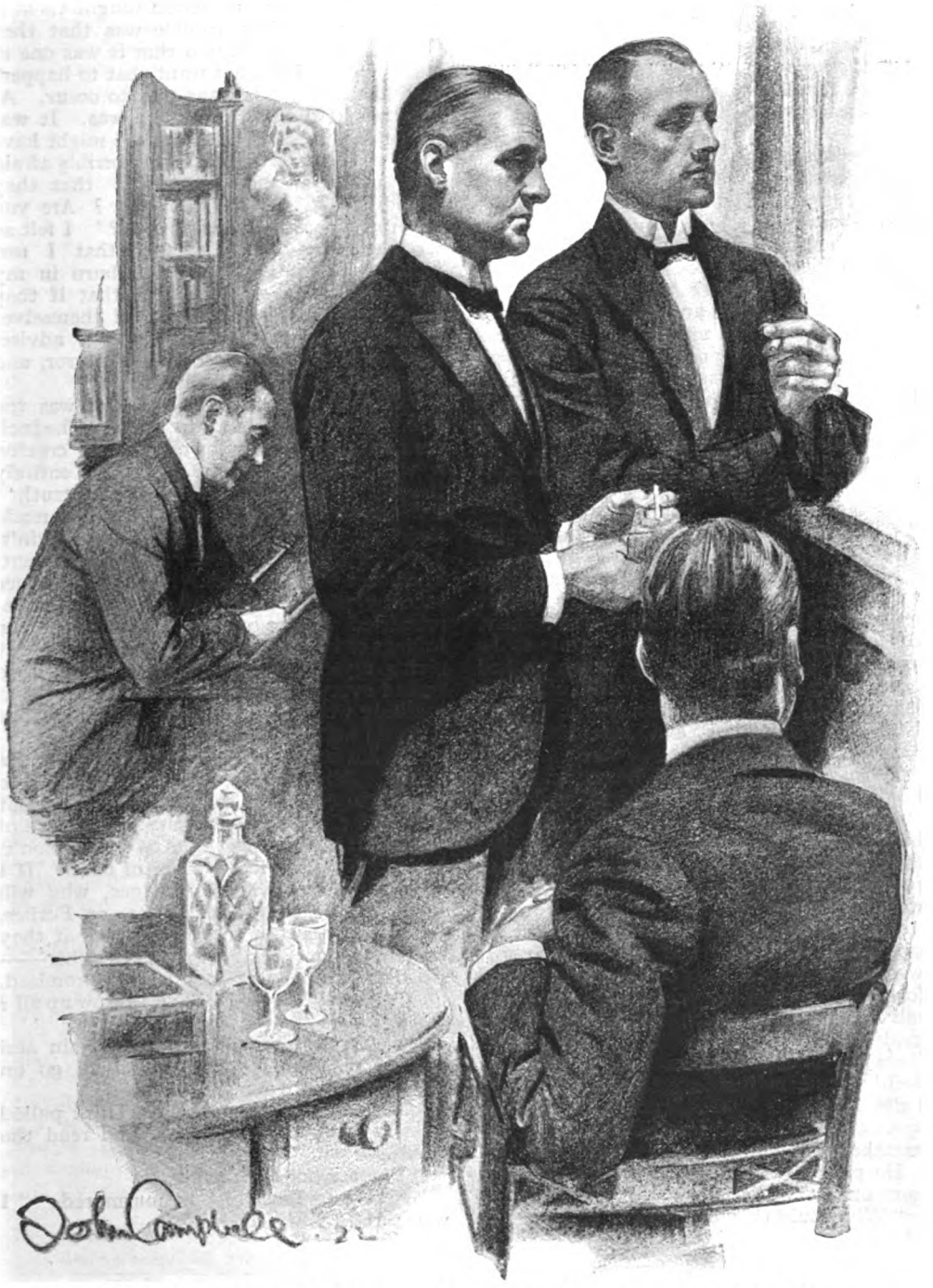
Loveday made a simple gesture of farewell.

"Buck up, old son," urged Denvil, venturing a friendly slap on the shoulder. "None of us is going to think the worse of you. You did the right and proper thing, and you must not fret. Good night to you."

Denvil, left alone, listened to the retreating footsteps on his stairs. Then he took from his clenched palm the crushed slip of paper and looked at it a second time. It bore the words:—

"You are not the man."

Denvil drew a deep, deep breath of relief.



"Now, Loveday, will you kindly go to that desk and prepare the slips? Come, you fellows, suppose we look out of the window until he is ready?"

"Trant or Forbes?" he murmured. "I wonder!"

Outside, Loveday, Trant, and Forbes at once went different ways. Next time they met they would be able to chat with customary familiarity; at the moment a sense of restraint was on their tongues and in their faces.

Loveday hailed a taxi and went home. Trant entered a restaurant and ordered a slight supper. Forbes climbed on top of a motor-bus.

As the motor-bus rumbled pleasantly towards Piccadilly Circus, Forbes pulled the slip of paper from his trouser pocket. He smoothed the creases and read as follows:—

"You are not the man."

Forbes stared long and hard at that simple line. His mood was unusually reflective. Presently he tore the paper into bits and scattered them upon the unsuspecting hats of the people in the Circus.

"Denvil or Trant?" he muttered. "I wonder!"

WHEN Trant had ordered his meagre supper he sat and stared at it in an abstract sort of way. An orchestra was playing the gayest waltz from the gayest revue, but that did not lessen his solemnity. After a long interval of thoughtfulness he extracted his particular slip, which he had read in Denvil's room; but instead of taking it from the covering envelope he pushed both under his plate, and commenced to eat, absently, moodily.

When Loveday reached home he tossed his hat and overcoat on a chair, sank into another one, and covered his pale face with both hands. He remained in that posture for a long time, resting his tired nerves—or perhaps fretting them. At last he rose, very wearily.

"Six months ago I asked for their advice," said he, petulantly, "and they gave it. It was the advice which, in my heart, I yearned for. Oh, why did they change it? It was a salve to my conscience; it soothed me; it made me almost forget. I put the case to them as hard-headed men of the world, deciding to take their answer as final. And I did take it as final. And now they have upset all, and I stand just where I did at the wretched beginning."

He pressed his palms to his temples and went on:—

"Why could they not let well alone? Yet I ought not to say that, because it is clear that six months of reflection taught them it was not well. The trouble was that they jumped to the conclusion that it was one of themselves. I did not want that to happen. God knows I didn't want that to occur. At any rate, I didn't *say* that it was. It was Forbes's blundering question. I might have said 'no' instantly; but I was horribly afraid they would suspect the truth; that they would say—'Is it *you*, Loveday? Are you covering yourself by subterfuge?' I felt so wretchedly guilty. The fact that I *was* alluding to myself seemed to burn in my cheeks. And then I thought that if they went on believing it was one of themselves I should get a more—comforting advice. Anyhow, they blundered into the error, and I did not directly contradict it.

"A minute afterwards I felt it was too late. How could I say to them: 'The incident happened in my own house. I created a wholly imaginary friend in an entirely imaginary house because I funked the truth'? I ought to have said it directly they made their mistake, but I couldn't—I couldn't. Yet that would have been a true statement. The house was this house—mine; the picture was my picture. I wanted absolutely disinterested advice, unmixed by pity or the feelings of friendship, and I wanted it without giving myself away. And now they have turned everything upside down, and I stand precisely where I did when I discovered that dreadful marriage certificate against me.

"There it is—behind that picture in the corner. What ought I to do? Take it to my solicitor? How easy that sounds! But who with a fine fortune jumps at a chance of yielding it to a stranger? And yet if I don't, I doubt if I shall know peace of mind. If I tear it up and hold my tongue, who will know? Not Denvil, or Trant, or Forbes, for they are sworn to silence. But if they ever *should* get talking with each other—— No, they are men of honour, and promised. Shall I see my lawyer? Shall I throw up all? Hard, hard!"

Loveday dropped into a chair again and was silent. He felt that he would go on thinking about it for years.

It was at that moment that Trant pulled his slip from under his plate and read the words:—

"You are not the man."

"Forbes or Denvil?" he murmured. "I wonder!"

GIBSON AND THE SPECIALIST

by

DENIS MACKAIL

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GILLETT R.I.

"PERHAPS you have wondered," said Gibson the next time I saw him, why it is that, although still in the prime of life, I am to be found so continuously wasting my time and substance within the confines of this by no means stimulating club. You ask yourself, doubtless, how, in these strenuous days, any man can be content to retire thus early from the battle-ground of his profession; or how he can reconcile it with his conscience to become, when still so far from the age of the psalmist, a mere passenger, as it were, on the vessel of sublunary existence." He gave a fleeting smile, as of satisfaction at the beauty of his own language, and looked at me inquiringly.

"I won't pretend," I answered, "that something of the sort hasn't crossed my mind. But, after all, most people retire when they can afford to retire; and there are plenty of men here who've never even had anything to retire from. Please don't take my interest in the stories that you have told me as implying curiosity about your private affairs."

I thought I had put it rather neatly. Yet in Gibson's face there appeared a look of momentary disappointment.

"My dear sir," he said, "I have no secrets from anyone. My past is an open book. And," he added, with determination, "I insist on telling you why it was that I gave up one of the most lucrative solicitors' practices in the whole of the City of London."

"Just wait a moment while I order my tea," I said, "and then I shall be delighted to hear about it."

He gave a sigh of relief.

"It's very good of you," he murmured. "I——"

He broke off, and sat there, drumming with his fingers on the arm of his chair, while the smoking-room waiter attended to my simple requests. And then, as soon as we were alone again, he began.

I WAS still a comparatively young man (said Gibson) when I succeeded to a partnership in the old-established firm of Montgomery and McGillycuddy, who had, and still have, a large commercial and general practice in the City, and occupy offices in Basinghall Street. I was a bachelor—as I still am—and I shared a flat in the neighbourhood of Victoria Street with my brother Cecil.

My life was very much one of routine. Regular hours at the office were followed by quiet evenings at the flat, and on Saturday afternoons and Sundays my brother and I—he was an architect, by the way—used to go off together and play golf. I had good health and a good income, with prospects of doing better every year, and if ever I thought about the matter, it seemed to me that I had settled down into as comfortable and harmless a rut as anybody could hope to find. As far as I could possibly tell, I should remain in it for the rest of my life, and I certainly had no particular wish to do anything else. But this was not to be.

About five o'clock one Spring evening, after I had been carrying on this existence for four or five years, I had returned to the club-house at Sandy Heath after playing

a couple of rounds with my brother, and was sitting on the bench in the locker-room, pleasantly exhausted after my exercise, and meditating perhaps on the advisability of giving my cleek a rest. Cecil was splashing about in a wash-basin in the next room, and occasionally we would shout remarks to each other through the open door.

I bent down to begin untying my shoelaces, when somehow or other my elbow knocked against the edge of my bag of clubs, which had been propped against the bench on which I was sitting; and in the hope of catching it before it fell, I shot my right arm quickly under my left leg and made a snatch at the strap of the bag. As I did so, I felt a sudden stab of pain—just here.

(At this point Gibson laid his finger on the lowest button of his waistcoat.)

The bag fell with a bang on the wooden floor, and I sat up again suddenly.

"By Jove!" I said to myself. "I wonder what I did."

And then, slowly and carefully, I repeated the movement. I leant forward, I passed my right hand gingerly under my left knee, and made a cautious grab at the air. Nothing happened.

But I wasn't quite satisfied. I did it once again, more rapidly this time, and as I closed my fist the little dart of pain returned. I sat up quickly.

"Cecil!" I shouted.

My brother appeared in the doorway.

"I say," I said, "I wish you'd come here a minute."

He came, wiping his hands on a towel and staring at me.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "Has somebody been at your locker?"

"No, no," I said. "But look here. When I lean forward like this, and put my arm just here, and then close my fist like that, I—hallo, there it is again. Whew!"

"There's what again?" he asked, still staring at me.

"A most extraordinary pain," I said; "in my inside."

Cecil flung his towel through the doorway of the inner room.

"Just a minute," he said. "What exactly do you have to do?"

"This," I explained. And I did it again. This time the pain was so sharp that I couldn't repress a cry.

"What do you think it is?" I asked, nervously.

Cecil put on his spectacles thoughtfully.

"Just a second," he said. "Let me have a try."

He sat down beside me on the bench, and tried to imitate my attitude.

"Like this?" he asked.

"No," I said. "It's the other arm. And you have to make a kind of grab with your fingers."

"Just show me," said Cecil.

"Like this," I said once more. And then I fairly yelped. It was exactly like having a red-hot corkscrew run into one's middle.

Cecil got up again slowly.

"I didn't feel anything," he said. "If I were you, I wouldn't get in that attitude again. I mean to say, it's one you could very well do without."

"Is that all you've got to say?" I asked, coldly. "Is it nothing to you that I am probably in for a very dangerous attack of appendicitis, if not something worse? Good Lord! I didn't expect very much sympathy from you, I admit; but to make a suggestion like that—why, how'd you like it if it hurt you like the devil to sit down, and all I said was that you'd better stand up? Eh?"

"If you feel like that about it," said Cecil, turning down the cuffs of his shirt, "I should think you'd better see a doctor."

This suggestion seemed suddenly to shift the thing on to a fresh plane; to carry my position as an invalid a stage—and an uncomfortable stage—farther.

"Perhaps it's nothing, really," I said. "Just a slight strain or something."

Cecil had turned his back and was rummaging in his locker.

"Oh, very likely," I thought I heard him say.

I decided to drop the subject. After all, though it was tactless of my brother to have pointed it out, there was no real necessity to assume that particular attitude again. I would wait a week, and if at the end of that time a further test produced the same symptoms, then the question of a doctor might be reconsidered. Meanwhile I would be careful to keep my right arm as far as possible from my left leg.

BUT mark what happened. Three days later, Cecil, while performing his morning toilet in the bathroom, tripped over the cord of his dressing-gown, put out his hand to save himself, crashed through the window, and sliced his fore-arm with a deep cut about nine inches long. He shouted out to me, and when I came in and found him looking slightly green and bleeding like a pig, I decided that, arteries being the kind of things that they were, it would be a good thing to get hold of assistance. I tore downstairs to the flat below ours, where, as I knew, a doctor resided, and in less than half an hour Cecil's arm was safely stitched and bandaged, and, I may add, in less than three weeks he was playing golf again.

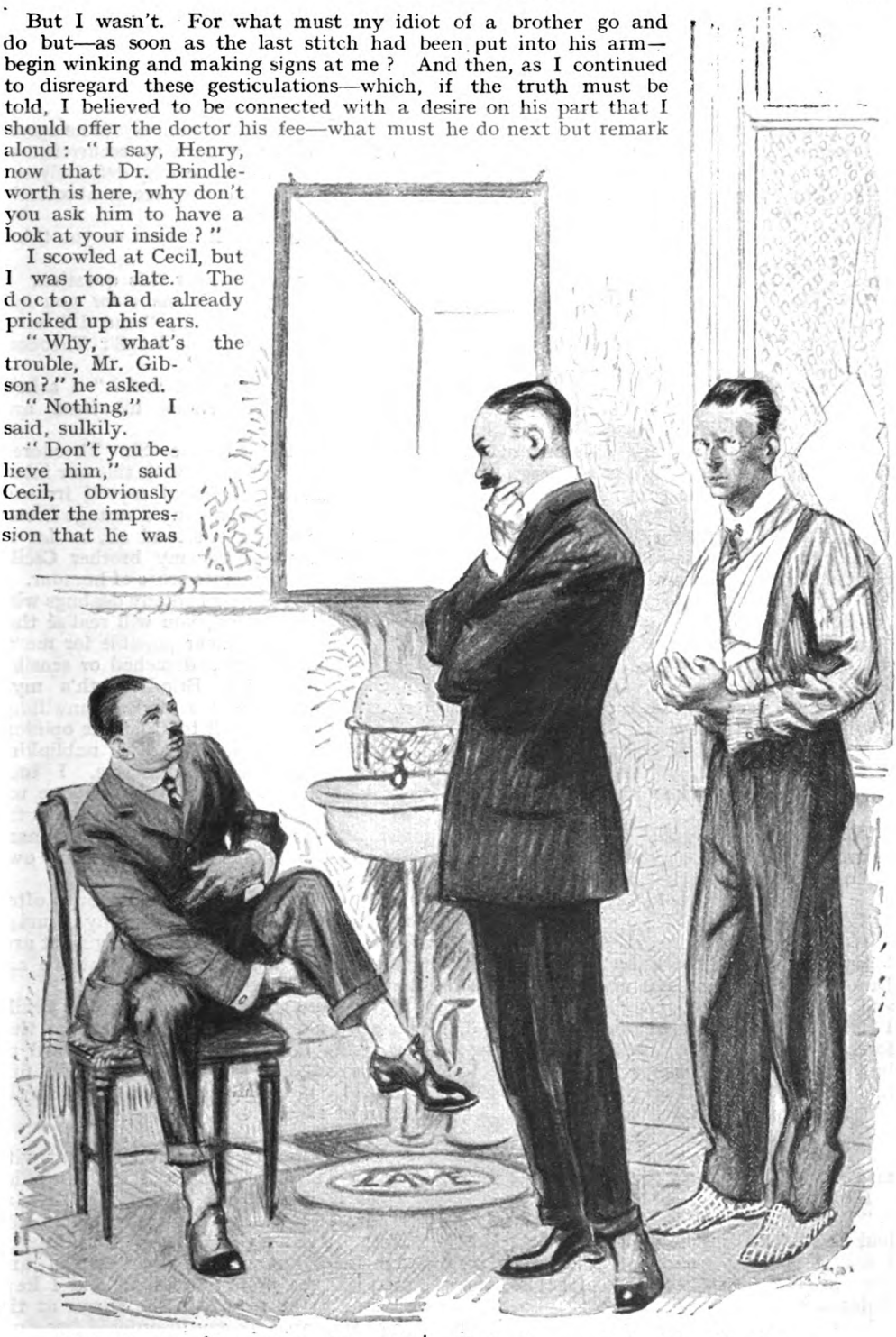
But I wasn't. For what must my idiot of a brother go and do but—as soon as the last stitch had been put into his arm—begin winking and making signs at me? And then, as I continued to disregard these gesticulations—which, if the truth must be told, I believed to be connected with a desire on his part that I should offer the doctor his fee—what must he do next but remark aloud: "I say, Henry, now that Dr. Brindleworth is here, why don't you ask him to have a look at your inside?"

I scowled at Cecil, but I was too late. The doctor had already pricked up his ears.

"Why, what's the trouble, Mr. Gibson?" he asked.

"Nothing," I said, sulkily.

"Don't you believe him," said Cecil, obviously under the impression that he was



"It's like this, doctor," I said. "When I sit down and do this—like that, you see—I get a pain just there."

being witty. "When he stands on his head, he gets a pain in his toe-nails. Don't you, Henry?"

I saw the doctor looking at me curiously. In dealing with his patients' alleged symptoms the last thing that a general practitioner can afford to have is a sense of humour, but Dr. Brindleworth, I should judge, can never have been tempted to indulge in such an extravagance.

"Is that really so?" he asked.

"No," I replied. "My brother's pulling your leg, I'm afraid."

"No, I'm not," said Cecil, whose recent escape from death seemed to have gone slightly to his head. "Just you show him, old chap, what you showed me at the club-house on Sunday."

I suppose I might have refused even then, in which case the rest of my life would have been a very different story. But Cecil's mockery had put me on my mettle. After all, the pain had been a very real pain at the time.

"It's like this, doctor," I said. "When I sit down and do this—like that, you see—I get a pain just there."

I only gave him a rough outline of the position, for, to tell the truth, I saw no point in taking unnecessary risks.

Dr. Brindleworth looked at me seriously, and rubbed his chin with his hand.

"That's very interesting," he said. "What kind of pain is it?"

I described it to the best of my ability.

"And just there, you said?" he went on, poking his finger into me.

"Yes," I said.

"Perhaps you would let me make an examination?" he suggested.

Again I hesitated, but I saw that I had gone too far to go back.

"All right," I said.

We went along into my bedroom, and I lay flat on my back on the bed. Dr. Brindleworth tapped me and kneaded me and listened to me and breathed at me. I felt rather congested about the head, for he had insisted on removing my pillow; but beyond this I was able truthfully to inform him that I felt no pain at all.

"Now raise your legs," he said.

I did so.

"Now turn on your face," he commanded.

I obeyed.

"H'm!" said Dr. Brindleworth, when he had finished hitting me on the back. "May I ask if you have had anything to worry you lately? Any business troubles, for instance?"

"No," I said, with my mouth full of blanket. "Nothing at all."

"H'm!" he repeated, and he began walking up and down the bedroom, frowning to himself. Presently he said:—

"As far as I can tell, there's nothing here that need seriously worry you. But I'd be very glad if you'd let me take you to see Sir Theodore Backgammon. If he agrees with me, and if you have no recurrence of the pain, then I think we may definitely say that with moderate care there is absolutely no cause for alarm."

"Oh!" I said. "But what do you think I've got?"

He didn't seem to hear this question.

"I'll make an appointment for you one day next week," he said, "and I'll come with you, of course, and let Sir Theodore know what I've found."

"But what *have* you found?" I asked.

Dr. Brindleworth shook his head and smiled faintly.

"I mustn't anticipate Sir Theodore's diagnosis," he said, and with this our interview terminated. I found myself irrevocably pledged to accompany a strange doctor to a strange specialist's, and all, as far as I could see, to satisfy my brother Cecil's peculiar and immoderate sense of humour.

But if you have ever had any dealings with the medical profession, you will realize that by now it was no longer possible for me to treat the thing from a detached or sensible point of view. Dr. Brindleworth's mysterious examination, his obvious unwillingness to commit himself to a definite opinion, and, above all, his deadly, unblinking seriousness, had hypnotized me. I took to looking in the glass to see if I were unnaturally pale or flushed; I woke up in the night and prodded myself for imaginary pains; I tried, but failed, to find my own pulse.

But one thing I did not do. Though often tempted, at the last minute my courage always failed me. I never put my right arm under my left leg and snatched at the air. The thing simply could not be faced.

I played no golf that week-end, but Cecil's arm gave me all the ostensible excuse that I wanted. Besides, it was raining hard all the time, and I sat in front of the fire, reading Hooper's Medical Dictionary, in the edition of 1839.

AT last the day of my appointment with Sir Theodore came. I left the office early, picked up Dr. Brindleworth at his flat, and we drove together to Harley Street. It was a silent drive. Dr. Brindleworth had put on his best clothes and stared straight in front of him, and I kept on glancing at myself in the mirror at the side of the cab. To my disordered imagination there seemed something unearthly about my pallor.

First of all Dr. Brindleworth and I waited together in the specialist's dining-room, and then I waited alone, while the two Æsculapians retired to the consulting-room and discussed my case—or possibly my income. Presently a butler was sent to fetch me in.

By this time my nervous terror had reached such a pitch that I could scarcely control my limbs. I am not positive, but I believe that I entered the consulting-room on the butler's arm. Sir Theodore Backgammon was sitting at an enormous writing-desk, almost entirely covered with examples of the silversmith's art. He had a very large face, a high forehead, and wore a white piqué slip in the opening of his waistcoat. As I came tottering in, he rose and grasped my hand.

"Take a seat, Mr. Gibson," he said, and he switched on a small reading lamp, so that the light went straight into my eyes.

"Now, just tell me, in your own words," he went on, "exactly how you first became aware of these symptoms. Don't overlook any detail, just because you think it seems unimportant. I want to have everything."

HE smiled ferociously, and I began. I told him how, on Sunday week, I had been playing golf with my brother. I described the way that we had played, and the time that we had taken. I explained how I was sitting down, after the second round, just preparing to change my shoes. And thus at last I led up to the famous attitude and the sudden pain.

All the time that I was speaking, Sir Theodore nodded his head and stabbed at his blotting-pad with a silver pencil-case. And when I had quite finished, he said :—

"Just take off your shirt."

"I beg your pardon ?" I asked.

"Sir Theodore wishes to make a further examination," explained Dr. Brindleworth, darting forward.

"Oh!" I said. "All right." And I disrobed.

"Just lie down on that sofa, Mr. Gibson," said Sir Theodore ; and when he had got me there, with my shirt off, he went into the corner of the room and began washing his hands. A faint smell of scented soap drifted across to me.

"Have you any idea what is the matter with me ?" I inquired.

Dr. Brindleworth looked at me reprovingly. Sir Theodore made no answer. Presently he finished drying his hands, and then at last he came over to the sofa. He slipped his arm behind me, seemed to release some kind of catch, and the part of the sofa which had been supporting my head suddenly gave way.

"Ah!" he said. "That's better."

And then he set to work. First he pinched, prodded, and poked the whole of one side, and then he stepped round the foot of the sofa and began on the other. Once I tried to ask him a question, but he wouldn't hear of this.

"Quiet, please," he said, threateningly.

Unlike Dr. Brindleworth, he never asked me whether I felt any pain. But, as a matter of fact, he gave me agony, for he had the sharpest finger-nails of any man I've ever met, and I bore the marks of his examination for many days.

Presently he said :—

"Get up. Place your feet together. Shut your eyes. Extend the right arm so. Now touch your nose. Now with the left arm. Now on one leg. Now on the other. Now again. Now put on your shirt."

"May I open my eyes ?" I asked.

But he didn't answer. So I risked it. I found that he had placed an arm-chair immediately facing his consulting-room window.

"Sit down there," he said.

I did so.

"Keep your eyes fixed on that chimney-pot," he went on, "and now watch what I do."

He began moving things about, just where I couldn't see them. It was like the bit at the dentist's where he ties you down with a gag and then starts fiddling with his instruments at the back of your head.

"What's this ?" asked Sir Theodore, pointing to something.

I knew what it was quite well, though I should have thought that in my position only a bird could have seen it ; but, for the life of me, I couldn't recall its right name. Afterwards, when it was too late, I remembered that it was a vinaigrette.

"It's—it's——" I began.

"Never mind," said Sir Theodore, cutting me short. "Now tell me what this is."

Again, although my eyes were glued on the chimney-pot outside, I saw what he was holding quite clearly. It was one of those little silver things, like paper-knives, that doctors flatten your tongue with when they want to look far down your throat. I knew it had some special name. But to save my soul I couldn't remember whether it was *spatula* or *scapula*. So, as I didn't want him to laugh at me if I said the wrong thing, I answered :—

"I can't remember."

"H'm!" said Sir Theodore. "That will do, now. Just turn your chair round. That's right. Now sit down again. Now cross your legs. Now——"

And at this moment he hit me a violent blow on the knee-cap.

"Hi!" I shouted, jumping up. "Don't do that!"

Sir Theodore turned triumphantly to Dr. Brindleworth, and Dr. Brindleworth looked admiringly at Sir Theodore. It was clear that only a three-guinea specialist could have delivered that blow with such startling accuracy.

Sir Theodore then went back to his writing-table.

"You can put your coat on again, Mr. Gibson," he said.

I put it on.

"Tell me, now," he continued, "have you been overworking at all lately?"

"No," I said, truthfully.

"What is your profession?" he asked.

"I am a solicitor," I said.

"No money troubles?" he went on.

"No," I said. "None."

He made a note of this on a piece of paper.

"Well, Mr. Gibson," he continued, when he had done this, "I don't wish to say anything to alarm you. But I am very glad that you came to me when you did. Very glad indeed."

I bowed.

"Not at all," I said. "I——"

"How long would it take you to get your affairs in order?" he interrupted me.

"They are in order," I protested. "I'm afraid I don't quite follow you."

"Good," said Sir Theodore. "Now I will give you a letter of introduction to a colleague of mine in Cape Town. I want you to drop everything here, absolutely, and catch the next mail-boat from Southampton. If you will place yourself entirely in my friend's hands when you reach the Cape, I still have every hope that it may not be too late. Have you got anyone who could travel with you?"

"No," I said. "But——"

Sir Theodore stopped me with a frown.

"I will find a male nurse to accompany you, then," he said. "You had better be prepared to be away for at least eighteen months. This is a shock to you, no doubt, Mr. Gibson, but I assure you that you can count yourself lucky that things have gone no farther than they have. In four or five years from now, I have no hesitation in saying that you will be a different man. That is, if you follow my advice in every way."

"But," I exclaimed, "I can't possibly leave my business for as long as that."

"No?" said Sir Theodore. "Then I think you had better dispose of your interest in it. I suppose there will be no difficulty about that?"

"But I don't want——" I began again, and again I was silenced with a frown.

"Understand me clearly," said Sir Theodore. "Unless you follow my advice to the very letter, I must retire from your case at once. With my standing and reputation I couldn't possibly take it on any other terms."

He got up as he spoke, and began edging me towards the door. I had been holding his cheque in my hand ever since I had resumed my coat, and as he ushered me out he extracted it from my limp fingers. The whole world seemed to be going round. The butler helped me into my overcoat and

At this moment Sir Theodore hit me a violent blow on the knee-cap.

pushed me down the steps into the street. I can't remember seeing Dr. Brindleworth again, so I suppose that he had stayed behind. In a horrible kind of dream I crawled into a cab and went straight back to my flat.

The next day I arranged for my share in Messrs. Montgomery and McGillycuddy's business to be sold, and on the following Saturday my brother came down to Southampton and saw me off. Targett, the male nurse, travelled in the next compartment.

Cecil had lunch with me on board before the *Kenilworth Castle* sailed. Oddly enough, we found ourselves next to some people that he knew—a mother and daughter on their way out to stay for two or three weeks at Madeira. I was introduced to them, but I

Only a three-guinea specialist could have delivered that blow with such startling accuracy.

was too much depressed to say more than a few words, and as soon as Cecil had left I went to my berth and lay down. Shortly afterwards I felt the engines moving, and I realized with an aching heart that I had left my native country, possibly for ever.

We had a rough passage through the Bay, and it was another forty-eight hours before I came on deck. Almost the first person I saw was Miss Westerham, Cecil's friend. I raised my cap.

"Feeling better?" she asked, sympathetically.

I had to admit that I was.

"Mother's still in bed," she said. "Shall we go for a walk?"

For a moment I wondered whether I ought to ask Targett's permission, but she was a very attractive girl. I decided to risk it.

"I shall be delighted," I said.

AND thus began our first acquaintanceship, which lasted exactly two days. I knew that I was in love with her in less than ten minutes, and it was torture to realize, as I did, that whereas a fortnight ago I should have been free to offer her my hand the first moment that I dared, now, as a condemned man, I must be pledged to perpetual silence. Nevertheless, until the ship should arrive at Funchal, I made up my mind to enjoy our friendship while it lasted. Poor girl, I only hoped that she, too, would not also become too fond of me.

All that day we paced the deck together, played quoits and shuffleboard with each other, and in the evening we sat up until the lights were extinguished. She told me the name of her favourite authoress, and I told her how to register a limited company at Somerset House. It was, I thought, a communion of souls.

The next day was just the same. Mrs. Westerham was still in bed. Targett had raised no objection to my behaviour. And I—well, I almost began to forget the hideous disease which had driven me from England. In the afternoon the ship's sports were held, and Miss Westerham and I competed as partners in the arithmetic race, the egg-and-spoon race, the cracknel race, and the deck-croquet mixed doubles. The thought of our parting at Madeira became unbearable. And yet, how could I ask any woman to share the life which I saw stretching before me? No, no. I must, and I would, carry my burden alone.

But late that night, as we sat together on a box full of life-belts, listening to the throb of the propeller and the sound of the water rushing from the ship's prow, she suddenly asked me:—

"Why can't you wait at Madeira and catch the next boat on? Would it really interfere with your plans?"

"I cannot do it," I replied.

"But I'm sure the purser could arrange it," she said. "Now, do."

"Miss Westerham," I answered. "Enid—if I may call you that—I will tell you the truth. I have been sent out to South Africa by Sir Theodore Backgammon, in the care of a male nurse. His name is Targett; he is travelling second-class. Much as I would wish to stay at Madeira for as long as you remain there yourself, I dare not do it. My life may seem of little value to you. I dare say it does. But has any man the right to throw away his only chance of living, when so much that is good still remains to be done in this world? I ask you, has he?"

"Gracious!" said Miss Westerham. "Why, surely you can't be as bad as all that!"

"I am," I said, sadly.

"But what is wrong with you?" she asked. "How could a man as ill as you say you are beat the ship's record for the high jump? You are making fun of me."

"I wish that I were," I said.

"But what is it?" she repeated. "Is it your lungs?"

"I don't think so," I said.

"But surely you must know," she insisted. "Unless, that is—I mean to say——" And she blushed.

"No, no," I said, hastily. "Whatever it is, it is nothing that I would hide from you. The answer to your question is in my state-room, in a sealed letter addressed to Dr. Underwood of Cape Town. He is to take over my case when I arrive."

"But do you mean to tell me that you have let them send you off, half round the world, without ever asking what was wrong with you?" she asked, gasping.

"You don't understand," I said. "There are some cases in which it is kinder for the patient not to be told. All I know is that when I was changing my shoes after a game of golf a few weeks ago, I leant forward and put my right arm under my left leg, and immediately I felt the most agonizing pain."

"You did what?" said Miss Westerham.

"I put my right leg—no, I mean my left hand was—no, look here," I said, breaking off. "I'll show you."

I sat on the edge of a deck chair, and for the first time since the day that I had had that warning twinge I reconstructed the attitude.

"Well?" asked Miss Westerham. For some reason she had her handkerchief pressed against her mouth.

"It's a most remarkable thing," I said, looking up at her from where I was crouching.

" It's a most extraordinary and inexplicable affair, but—— Good heavens, it's gone ! "

" What's gone ? " she asked, coughing a little as it seemed.

" The pain ! " I cried. " A miracle has happened ! Miss Westerham—Enid, if I may call you that—I am cured ! I am free ! At last I can speak to you. At last the hideous cloud has lifted. Enid—dearest—this afternoon we tied for the second place in the egg-and-spoon race. Will you not let me carry the egg of your beauty in the spoon of my love for the rest of our two lives ? "

Miss Westerham turned her back quickly. I could see her shoulders shaking with emotion.

" There, there," I said. " I know I was inpulsive. I know I have startled you, but——" I put out my hand and touched her gently.

" No, no," she said, shuddering. " Leave me. Leave me at once." And to my horror she burst into a peal of hysterical laughter.

' Enid ! " I cried. " Speak to me ! Answer me ! "

" I can't," she gasped out. " You're—you're so frightfully funny ! "

And with these terrible words she slipped past me and fled down the nearest companion.

In that moment (said Gibson impressively) I knew that my love for her was dead. Since she subsequently married my brother, this was probably just as well. But for the time being I was like a man distraught. To have escaped like this from the very jaws of death, to have laid one's hand and fortune at the feet of a chit of a girl, and then to be told that one was funny. Nay, that one was frightfully funny. It was too much.

I sat on the edge of a deck chair, and for the first time since the day that I had had that warning twinge I reconstructed the attitude.

How I reached my cabin again I do not know. Targett was waiting up for me, but I dismissed him at once. Then I took Sir Theodore's letter from my despatch-case, broke the seal, and opened it. The next moment I had suffered another overwhelming shock. Sir Theodore had written :—

"*Dear Underwood,—I am sending you herewith one rich solicitor. I don't want to see him again for eighteen months. Meanwhile I am counting on fifty per cent. of whatever you can get from him. If there's anything the matter with him except too much money, I'll eat my stethoscope.*

"*Yours ever,*

"THEODORE BACKGAMMON."

For a minute and a half I stared at this unspeakable missive. Then, with an oath, I ran to the purser's room. He was in bed—on the top of a chest of drawers, as is the habit of sailors—but he received me with the utmost courtesy.

"When's the next boat back to Southampton ?" I asked.

"To-morrow afternoon, from Funchal," he said.

"Can you book me a berth on it ?"

"Yes," he said. "Unless it's full. Will you want accommodation for your man ?"

"No," I answered. "My man is going on. He's not been at all well, and I think the voyage will do him good. Here are fifty pounds to cover his expenses. May I ask you to be good enough to hand him the balance when he reaches Cape Town, and to see that he delivers this letter to Dr. Underwood in person ?"

"Certainly," said the purser.

I took an envelope from his desk, put Sir Theodore's letter in it, fastened it up, and handed it over.

"Thank you," I said. "Good night."

The next morning I packed a handbag and slipped over the side while Targett was having his breakfast. In a few more hours I was safely on board the *Saxon*, and by the Monday morning I was back in London. I took a cab and drove straight to Sir Theodore's house in Harley Street The same butler opened the door.

"I wish to see Sir Theodore Backgammon at once" I said.

To my surprise, the butler shook his head.

"Haven't you heard, sir ?" he asked.

"No," I said. "What is it ?"

"Sir Theodore has had a serious breakdown, sir," said the butler. "He was removed last Tuesday to E——." He gave the name of a well-known private home for mental cases.

"But," I shouted, "do you realize that he made me sell my practice and start off half round the world only ten days ago ? It's monstrous ! It's intolerable ! Why didn't you warn me ? How dared you admit me to the house of a certified lunatic ? If there's a law in England, I'll get damages from him."

But the butler shook his head again.

"I'm afraid it's not my fault, sir," he said. "But if you wish to consult a very respectable firm of lawyers, I can tell you where several of his best patients have gone."

"Oh, you can, can you ?" I snorted. "Where's that ?"

"Montgomery and McGillycuddy, sir," said the butler. "In Basinghall Street."

GIBSON stopped, and looked at me out of the corners of his eyes.

"Do you see now," he asked, "why I never went back to my office again ?"

"Not quite," I said.

"How could I ?" he appealed to me. "My partners knew why I was selling my interest. I should have been the laughing-stock of every clerk in the place for the rest of my life. I couldn't face it. I invested the whole of my capital in Standard Oil, and I have lived at the Caviare ever since."

"And you never felt that pain again ?" I inquired.

"Ah," said Gibson, "I thought you might ask that. It brings up the most unpleasant part of the whole story. About a fortnight after I got back to my flat, my brother Cecil came into my room with an angry look on his face.

"'I wish,' he said, 'the next time you borrow my tie to keep your breeches up, you'd take care not to go off with my best gold safety-pin.'

"'What do you mean ?' I asked.

"'Look here,' he said. 'Here have I been hunting high and low for the thing for over a month, and all the time it was stuck in the end of that tie I lent you, and hanging there in your locker at Sandy Heath. I value that pin. It was given me by that Miss Westerham that you met on the boat. What could I have said if she'd asked me where it was ?'

"'My dear Cecil,' I replied, I don't know and I don't care. But, leaving Miss Westerham out of it for the moment, I should like to know why the blazes you dignify that infernal pin with the unmerited description of "Safety." It's the most dangerous pin I ever met in my life !'

"And the next day," added Gibson, rising to his feet, "I moved out of the flat. After all, it's almost always a mistake for brothers to live together."

He threw me a final brief smile, and disappeared through the swing-doors into the hall.

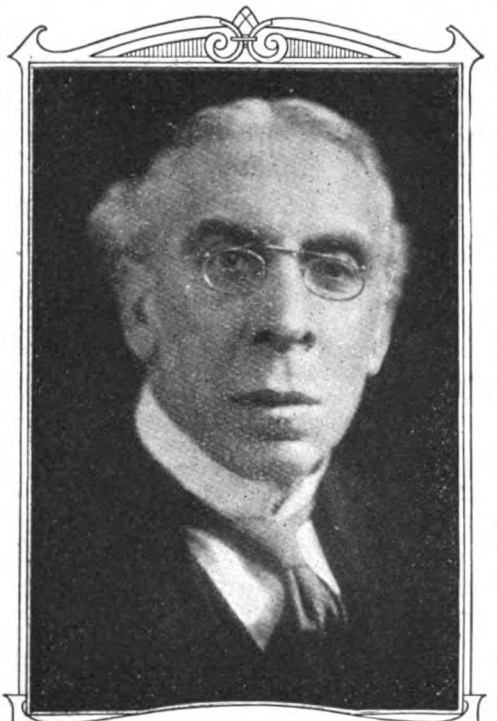
(ANOTHER OF GIBSON'S ADVENTURES WILL APPEAR IN AN EARLY NUMBER.)

THE SIX GREATEST MEN IN HISTORY

In last month's number Mr. H. G. Wells selected the following as the Six Greatest Men in History: Christ, Gautama Buddha, Aristotle, Asoka, Roger Bacon, and Lincoln. His list was submitted to a number of eminent men, who here give their reasons for agreeing with his choice, or otherwise. Further opinions will be given next month, when Mr. Wells will wind up the discussion.

I. ZANGWILL.

MY main object in contributing to this symposium is to correct Mr. Wells's omission of Moses—that giant figure who, as Heine put it, dwarfs even Sinai when he stands upon it. To overlook the immense contribution which the Mosaic Code made to civilization is characteristic of the general run of writers. But I note with pleasure, not unmixed with surprise, that such a popular Encyclopædia as Harmsworth's is constrained to recognize in Moses "a unique and sublime figure, without whom neither Judaism, Mohammedanism, nor Christianity could have been what they are." As the followers of these creeds total to-day nearly eight hundred millions, the impress of his mighty personality still lies, therefore, on almost half of humanity. The Encyclopædia adds that he is "worthy to be called the prototype of the Redeemer." And in so far as self-sacrifice is the keynote of the Christian Redeemer this is certainly true, for Moses was not only a great leader and a great legislator, whose Code, even unrevised by the light of modern knowledge, would bring the world to health and sanity, but also a great altruist, who offered to be blotted out of the book of life in atonement for his sinful people. (Exodus xxxii. 32.)



I. ZANGWILL.

Photo. Claude Harris.

And this prototype has the advantage over his successor that his Code was and actually is practised; whereas, despite that the Christians nominally outnumber every other sect, history since the days of the Catacombs reveals no Christian community, and hardly even a Christian individual. Possibly

the Sermon on the Mount is only just beginning to find its congregation. But though the voice of Jesus be still a voice crying in the wilderness, His place among the supermen of the spirit is undeniable. These are the only two founders of religions I would select. Mohammed, though claiming to be "the seal of the prophets," added nothing to the teachings of Moses and Jesus. Buddha's monkish gospel of renunciation puts him out of the running. If to call a religion into being were a sufficient test, supreme rank would have to be allotted to Mrs. Eddy, our one contemporary creed-founder.

Perhaps even more astonishing than Mr. Wells's omission of Moses is his omission of Shakespeare. The greatest writer the world has known does not even appear in his "Outline of History," whence his very name is banished. One might imagine it is because Mr. Wells, like Mr. Kipling, admires action more than thought. But then no words are too strong for his disdain of that demiurgic personality, Napoleon. Nobody will accuse me of over-love for militarism, and in the essay on Napoleon in my "Italian Fantasies" I anticipated Mr. Wells in calling him a snob. But, whatever the value of the Code Napoléon, the dynamic Corsican, who considered himself less a man than a force of nature, of whom Canning complained that he "dictated to all the nations of the Continent," who left Europe transformed and the Holy Roman Empire extinct, cannot be ejected from a front place merely because he pushed his way to it unscrupulously. Mr. Wells himself says in his great work, "In all history there is no figure so antithetical to the figure of Jesus of Nazareth." What more convincing proof of his greatness than to have incarnated Anti-Christ so consummately! He is as monumental as Milton's Satan.

The only name apart from that of Jesus in which my list would agree with Mr. Wells's is Aristotle, and I need add nothing to his thesis in honour of the supreme scientific thinker whom Dante hailed as the "maestro di color che sanno"—the master of those who know. But the fact that Dante was compelled by a perverted theology to place him in the Inferno—even though in its pleasantest circle—is sufficient to destroy Dante's own claim upon my list. Indeed, much as my own artistic sympathies predispose me to vote for him or some other great creative artist in words, sounds, shapes, or colours, it is only in another man of science that I can find adequate greatness or adequate influence upon mankind—Charles Darwin, that tireless, modest student, who, however his thought stand in need of correction to-day, has indubitably placed man face to face with his true position in the cosmos.

SIR OLIVER LODGE.

He that will be greatest among you, let him be your servant.

THAT is essentially Mr. Wells's text, the idea which he must have had at the back of his mind when he was asked to name the six greatest men in history; for he did not attempt to select those who had been most successful and greatest in achievement during their lifetime, but those who by faithful service and strenuous selflessness had left the most abiding influence for good as their contribution to the progress and elevation of the human race.

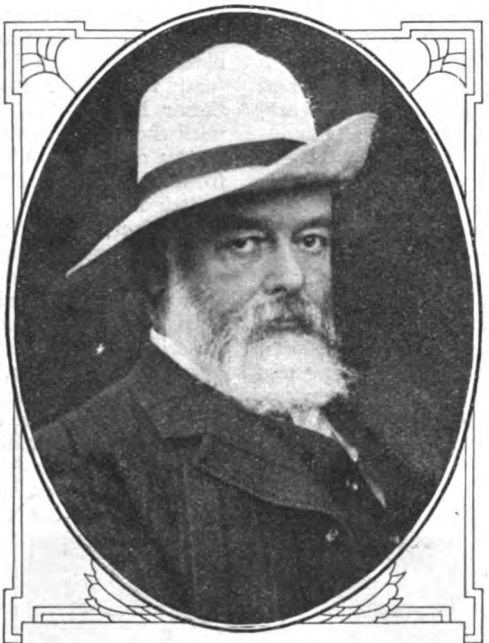
It is a great idea, and worthy of much acceptation. By its aid it seems almost possible to draw up a list of great men in various departments; though without some such clue we might feel confused and uncertain as to what constituted real greatness.

The conspicuousness of some men in history must depend partly on the times they lived in and the opportunity offered by contemporary events. Circumstances often seem to bring out the man. Cæsar was undoubtedly a great man; so was the Duke of Wellington. Both lived simple hard lives; both had weaknesses; neither was superhuman. But it seems hardly permissible or possible to estimate superhuman characteristics. The human part of superhumanity may perhaps be estimated and valued, but the *super* raises difficulties. If such personages as the Founders of religions are to be contemplated, then undoubtedly, to us in the Western world, every writing of a date, the mere figure 1922, supplies an answer to the question, Who is the most central figure in history? The consensus of the Western world has decided on its era of reckoning. The East may reckon differently, because its information is different. How are we to estimate the essential greatness of Buddha and Confucius save by the fact that millions of men have venerated them, and have tried, often ineffectually, to practise their teachings or to follow their example? But one can hardly call the outcome of such a life "success," nor does it result in personal happiness. It is a strange success that ends in scourging and a public execution. Aye, if that were indeed the end. Far from it. But the word *success* is out of the picture.

Suffering alone is not a contribution to greatness; but unnatural and artificially inflicted suffering may be the symbol and consequence of the revolutionary character of that which has preceded it. It is a sign that something new was striving to enter the mind of man, and that the living generation

of men rebelled against it and sought to exterminate it. This it is which lends its significance to martyrdom, and enables it to be taken as one of the signs of greatness. The apostles of Christendom suffered in this way. So did Jeanne d'Arc. So in a minor degree did Roger Bacon and Galileo. We have always been disgracefully wasteful of our really great men, and have run after and worshipped the greatness which makes for immediate worldly success.

So it seems safe to assume that if a man meet with universal acclaim in his own lifetime he cannot be far above the level of his age. Hence, perhaps, the profound sentence: "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you." If you encounter no ridicule and meet with no opposition, take heed: the living truth may not be in you. It can hardly be by conscious magnanimity, but rather by conscious greatness of ambition, that Cæsar and Hannibal, Napoleon and Charlemagne, arose and contributed their quota—sometimes their magnificent quota—for good or ill. The instinct which rebels against selecting any of these powerful rulers as among the greatest of mankind is a sound one. Mr. Wells, in his remarkable selection, has chosen rather the meek and lowly, the despised and rejected. It is this instinct which has led him to select Roger Bacon from among men of science instead of Isaac Newton.



SIR OLIVER LODGE.

Photo. Vandyk.

The treatment of Roger Bacon by the University of Oxford, and the nation generally, was not only a disgrace but a misfortune: for it successfully extinguished his torch, and destroyed the fruit of his labours. But whether the modern universities would now be any wiser—given the same novelty of subject, the same heterodoxy of teaching, and the same insistence on what appears to be the eccentric or the supernormal—may be doubted. Each age has its own wisdom and its own folly. And the pioneers foreshadowing the knowledge of a future age have to suffer for their untimely precocity. There seems no remedy for this, however much it may be subsequently deplored.

Unfortunately, the strongest kind of ignorant prejudice is the ecclesiastical variety; and every new advance has been met with priestly censure and opposition, with contumely and opprobrium. The trace of superhumanity associated with priesthood seems to be a dangerous element, which only the fine intuition or robust common sense of a few can prevent from degenerating into priestcraft. The rest stultify themselves by succumbing to the temptation of the devil to attribute every glimpse of new truth to his machinations; so that by condemning and obstructing Divine truth they may be led to commit the unforgivable sin.

So the pioneers inevitably suffer, and thus help to prove that they are pioneers. For if they have caught a glimpse of reality their persistence is inevitable, unless they too are willing to undergo damnation. It is a test not to be despised, and far superior to the test of the attainment of a throne. Sometimes, indeed, a kingdom is established as the distant outcome of their labours, but it is not the pioneer's own kingdom. Moses established the kingdom of David and Solomon. Peter established the Papacy. Jeanne d'Arc restored the King of France to his throne. But for themselves they secured nothing but an obscure or an agonizing death. The Promised Land was not for them. They died in the wilderness of abuse and derision.

Mr. Wells's test for greatness is a fine one. And now that I am asked to draw up a list too, in the light of his trenchant remarks, I feel incompetent. I cannot survey mankind from China to Peru as he can, though I recognize the greatness of those he has mentioned. If I had been asked without the help of his article I should have said—not attempting to place them in any order—Moses and Socrates, Newton and Shakespeare. Then I should have

hesitated, and perhaps might have added Jeanne d'Arc and Lincoln. But I should probably not have had the inspiration to pitch upon Lincoln unaided. The question is too big, and I cannot range far enough afield. A throne makes its occupant unduly conspicuous, but a man for whom I have a high, though ignorant, admiration is that civilized early ruler, Akhnaton of Egypt, who withstood the priests and attempted Monotheism. Then, again, Cromwell was undoubtedly a great man: and so was Alfred the Great.

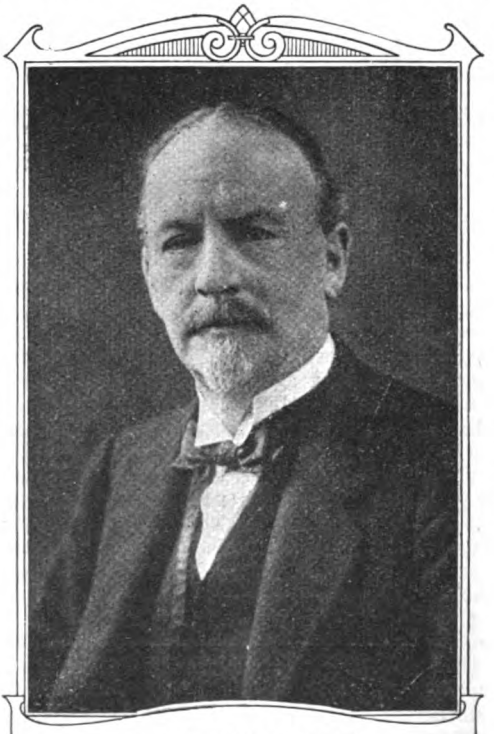
Very impressive also are Archimedes and Leonardo, and many another great figure, most of them beyond my grasp. Of contemporary men of science I should hail Clerk Maxwell and Pasteur as the most enduring in achievement. But Maxwell is too little known, and his work is too recondite for general appreciation yet. So I will adhere to the six I have mentioned above, and leave this attempt to estimate the signs of true greatness to those who are nearer the mountain top themselves.

What I am sure of is that true greatness is not compatible with the fear of man. Anything that man can do unto one ought to be regarded as insignificant; but truly it bringeth a snare. The great must pursue their solitary way, and must suffer accordingly. Unwillingness to undergo tribulation for truth's sake conduces to success, but not to undying and immortal fame.

A. B. WALKLEY.

"THE world," a sage once observed, "knows nothing of its greatest men." On this point, as on so many others, it has been waiting for information from Mr. H. G. Wells. Asked to name the half-dozen outstanding figures of history, he says that the question is quite harmless, and, indeed, amusing. Are we to reckon Mr. Wells among Mr. Peter Magnus's friends? At any rate, some people will find the question merely futile. To ask it is to confuse the history of the world with college class-lists and "racing results." In Mr. Wells's list Aristotle gets a prize and Plato only a *proxime accessit;* that dark horse Asoka comes in an easy winner, while favourites like Alexander, Cæsar, and Napoleon are not even "placed." If you want to know why this or that candidate is disqualified, the tip, apparently, is *cherchez la femme.* Mohammed had too many wives and too much trouble with them. Alexander organized (and took part in) a wholesale wedding. Cæsar had an "affair" (and at fifty-four) with the lovely Cleopatra. So all three must "stay off the roll." This bitter misogyny from the author of "Ann Veronica" is not a little surprising.

The fact, surely, is that this inquiry about the six greatest men is a concession to the Anglo-Saxon sporting instinct. Who is the champion heavy-weight, golfer, tennis-player? Who is the richest millionaire in America? These are questions susceptible of a definite answer, if you happen to know it. It seems natural, then, to ask such questions in other fields. Which are the hundred best books? Which is the best short story in the English language? And now, who are the six greatest men in history? But these questions are not susceptible of a definite answer. They will be answered in a thousand ways by as many temperaments. They are futile.



A. B. WALKLEY.

Photo. Lafayette.

Even supposing these questions were not futile, even supposing, for instance, we could know for certain the names of the six greatest men in mundane history, what would the knowledge profit us? It would be merely a "curious" fact, a piece of statistics, like the comparative heights of Mount Everest and Primrose Hill, or the exact number of five-pound notes, laid end to end, it would take to go round the earth at the

Equator. In itself it would tell us nothing about the greatest men. Supposing Aristotle were " greater " than Plato, as Mr. Wells is disposed to surmise, what then ? Would it affect our opinion of either Aristotle or Plato ? Would they not, after the hierarchy was authoritatively established, be precisely what they were to us before ? In reality they are incommensurable. They represent different qualities and activities of the human mind, and to say that one is " greater " than the other is like saying that a four-ounce pat of butter is " greater " than four o'clock. Not so, I fancy I hear Mr. Wells reply; we are talking of " influence," of " permanent impression on the world," and in these they are commensurable. To which I should rejoin that it is beyond human power to ascertain their respective quantities of influence on human thought, and, even if it were not, the *virtue* of each, the value of each for human thought, would remain intact, inviolate. Plato and Aristotle can only be evaluated by studying and absorbing Plato and Aristotle, not by being told that one is " greater " than the other—a piece of information which the student will quietly reject as nothing to the purpose.

To establish, then, the six greatest names in history would, it seems to me, be no addition to useful knowledge, and to seek for them is merely a parlour-game—quite harmless, as Mr. Wells says, and amusing, no doubt, to those whom parlour-games amuse. But if we are to play it, I submit we must have a clear rule. I mean, we must choose some definite test of greatness, and stick to it. Now it strikes me that neither Mr. Wells nor his interviewer is playing quite fair. The interviewer wobbles between two tests, " character " and " influence " or " permanent impression on the world." Obviously the two are not necessarily conjoined. What about the primitive man who invented the wheel ? He may, for all we know, like Pope's " most women," have had " no character at all." He may have had too many wives or toyed with some prehistoric Cleopatra at the age of fifty-four. But his invention (possibly accidental) certainly left a permanent impression on the world. He triumphantly answers Mr. Wells's test : " Was the world different because he lived ? " But even Mr. Wells, who has obligingly unearthed Asoka for us, has not a word to say about this (I suggest) still greater man. Mr. Wells, however, proceeds to restrict his first criterion by another and a different question : " Did he start men to thinking along fresh lines with a vigour and vitality that persisted after him ? " Your great man must start us *thinking*—an intellectual test. Pass for the two great religious founders. Pass for Aristotle and Roger Bacon. But what shall we say to Asoka and Abraham Lincoln ? Were these great leaders of thought ? Great in " character " and " influence," of course (I say " of course " about Asoka to be civil to Mr. Wells—I never heard of Asoka in my life), but men of action rather than men of thought. And in estimating men of action there is always that doubt about the debt of " greatness " to favourable circumstances—a doubt which Mr. Wells frankly admits. " A man rises out of his age ; it is always difficult to determine how much he owes to his contemporaries ; how much of what he seemed to be was due to his own innate force, and how much to accident." You can think for yourself—" voyaging through strange seas of thought, *alone*," as Wordsworth's inscription runs on Newton's monument in Trinity Chapel—but you must act with others.

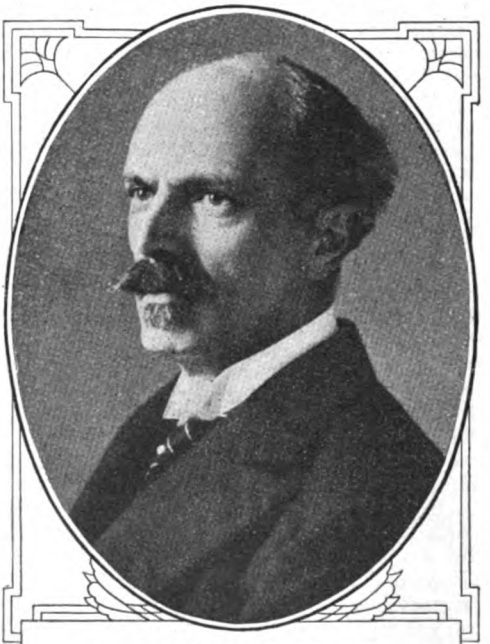
For one thing we must be grateful to Mr. Wells. He has had too much respect for the poets, the painters, the musicians of the world to lug any of them into his parlour-game. We have been spared such conundrums as, Is Beethoven " greater " than Mozart ? Or Shakespeare than Milton ? Or Michel Angelo than the lot ? True, the world is different because they lived. True, they have set men not only thinking but feeling, experiencing, enjoying. It is an inconsistency, then, to have ignored them ; but a happy one. Dante might have been queer company for Roger Bacon. Homer might have sniffed even at Asoka. Mercifully, they have all been ticketed " Not for Competition."

MAURICE HEWLETT.

" GREAT " is one of those words made flabby by vulgar use, whose meaning can only be guessed by the intention. You say a thing was " great " fun, when you mean that it was more amusing than you had expected ; you call an exhibition a " great " exhibition, when you may mean that it is a big exhibition, but probably that it is an exhibition. And so on. It is necessary, then, to guess what the promoter of this discussion, the host at the symposium, intended ; and in his absence one might have got at it by finding out what Mr. Wells thought him to intend, or what Mr. Wells himself intended. But Mr. Wells seems to have intended more things than one—which is unfortunate, but easy to understand. It is obvious that when he began with Our Lord he was thinking of a kind of greatness to which nobody could take exception ; of moral greatness, namely, of grandeur of soul, of magnanimity, and with that associating (as I think he should) originality and (as I think he should not)

greatness of effect upon the world and its moral economy. He followed up with Buddha, I don't doubt, for the same reasons. But then comes Aristotle, whose magnanimity, I imagine, he has to take for granted—and with whom, if influence is to count, he should have associated Plato; and then comes Friar Bacon, whose personal life is hidden in fable, and whose claims to influence are based upon his *Opus Majus*, and some pretty guesswork about motor-cars and aeroplanes. Come, come. If you begin to take books, I don't know why the author of Job is left out, or Homer; and if shots at machines are to the purpose I should put in a claim for Leonardo da Vinci, who not only conceived but drew such things, and for Horace Walpole, who imagined aerial warfare. With Asoka, who (he tells me) ruled from Afghanistan to Madras (as Babur did), Mr. Wells is going in for bigness, I see. There were many other remarkable men in Asoka's line of business, many of whom (like him) set to work improving their property. Napoleon was one. The number of times you make war depends upon circumstance; upon that, too, and opportunity, a great deal of a conqueror's effect in history must necessarily depend. Victory is not everything: often the beaten man—Hannibal!—is the greater man. Undoubtedly Napoleon was a greater man in his way of brigandage than Wellington and Blücher combined. The choice of Asoka in preference to him or Cæsar is not playing the game, though it is playing *a* game. Last, Abraham Lincoln: there he plumps again for magnanimity.

"What a piece of work is man!" I conceive that we should rule out influence in considering him, and measure if we can *das ding an sich*. We have our desiderata, most of them, in our heads: *grandeur of soul*, by which we mean moral grandeur, I think—that comes first; *originality*, after a long interval, comes second; the third place must be given to *personality*—charm, persuasiveness, gift of expression, without which the two first are hidden from us; fourthly, *totality* of development, for want of which no man perhaps could stand for the ideal; and lastly, *power*, an indefinable something, not to be confused with personality, which certifies you infallibly that you have been in commerce with greatness. I don't know that you will find all these in any man. But you will find some of them in a great man, and most of them in some few great men; and the last of them, at least, in all great men.



MAURICE HEWLETT.

Photo. Elliott & Fry.

I.—You find them all in Him whom Mr. Wells puts first, as I do. Few reading this symposium will disagree with us. "Truly this was the Son of God." was said of Him, as we read. Nothing higher can be said of any man than that, and to the best of my belief it has not been said of any other.

II.—Mr. Wells cannot take Confucius for granted, and I find myself in the same case with Buddha. He is venerated by millions, whose consent, if consent could carry it, would put him first. But if I cannot put him first of my own knowledge, neither can I put him second. So I must do without Buddha, and put Homer second, who, I dare say, has taught mankind more about human nature than any other man that ever lived. We don't know when he was born, or where; we have nothing but his poems to testify of him. I confess him inferior to my first choice, in being of his time rather than above it, in that he accepted man for the parasite he is instead of the self-sufficient creature he might be. But for that, he fulfils my conditions, and must stand second.

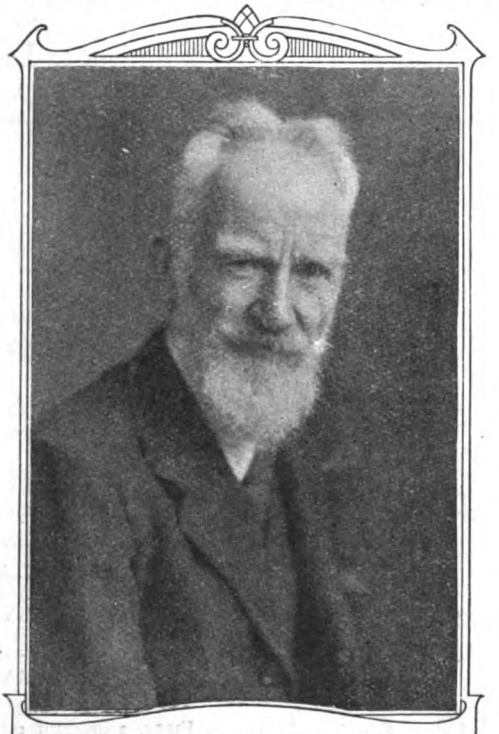
III.—Third, I put Socrates, for the wisdom, right reason, good humour, originality, and quiet heroism of him. A great man if ever there was one.

IV.—Next, certainly, Epictetus—with whom I feel bound to bracket another whose personality is not agreeable to me, but whose power I cannot but recognize. I mean St. Paul.

V.—St. Francis, the second Christian, could come fifth if I had room for him—

which I have not. He was, after all, a disciple, and, as such, not to be named with his Master. Besides, he had no real difficulties, showed sweetness rather than power, and died in his bed. I incline rather to another religious teacher whose time, even yet, is not fully come. The man I mean is George Fox, a truly great man. "The most awful, living, reverent frame I ever felt or beheld, I must say, was his in prayer." So said William Penn.

VI.—Lincoln was in many respects a Christlike man, in some respects a man like Socrates, and in one at least after Homer's own heart. If simplicity is divine, as I think it, we have it abundantly exemplified already. I omit Lincoln, then, for a man complete, so far as one can judge, from within outward, and, so far as human beings can be, self-sufficient. That man is Goethe.



G. BERNARD SHAW.

Photo, Vandyk.

G. BERNARD SHAW.

MR. WELLS has taken advantage of an idiotic question to do some more of his invaluable culture propaganda; but the question remains idiotic. Asking for the names of the six greatest men is like asking for the names of the six greatest tools in the carpenter's bag. Jesus, Who knew something of carpentering, thought Himself a good preacher and relatively an indifferent carpenter. If He had been apprenticed to a stone-mason instead, and stuck to His trade, He would probably have been left out of sight by Michel Angelo; and Michel Angelo would certainly have been completely eclipsed by Mr. Chaplin as a movie star. None of Mr. Wells's six would have had a dog's chance at an election against Titus Oates or Horatio Bottomley—two quite incommensurable characters, by the way; but I couple them because popularity is a common denominator for the two; and before you can compare men of different specific genius at all, you must find a common denominator for them.

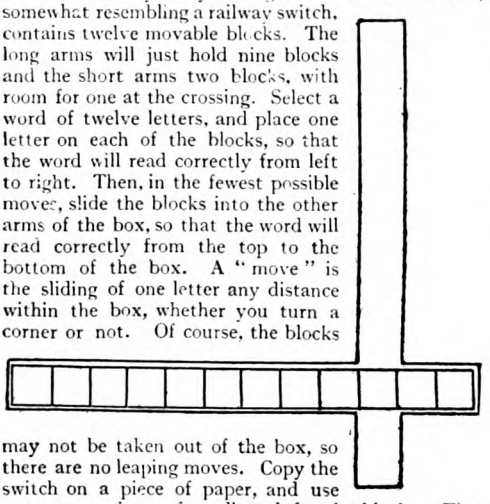
Mr. Wells uses a common denominator which obliges him to discard Napoleon and Mohammed as inferior to men who never had to govern for a single day. Had Mohammed been crucified before he ever had to spend a farthing of public money or control a day's police work, and had Jesus seen the Roman and Jewish power melt before Him and been made King of the Jews in earnest instead of in mockery, Mohammed would have been the pure, unstained martyr, and Jesus the soiled ruler and conqueror. Had Richelieu been a mathematician and Descartes a Prime Minister, Descartes would have been dragged down from the empyrean and Richelieu caught up into it. It is easy for an astronomer to be clean, but impossible for a sweep or a Polar explorer. We all know that it is silly for the pot to call the kettle black; what we do not know is that it is equally silly for the alabaster urn to reproach the pot for its blackness. Shelley's denunciations of Eldon and Castlereagh win our sympathy; but if Shelley had had to do the work of a Lord Chief Justice or a Prime Minister, he would not now seem a luminous angel to us, however well he might have done it. Lincoln had the luck to be shot at the moment when the really difficult part of his job was beginning.

Great men are statues of our ideals. Our hopes and enthusiasms crystallize upon some name: that is all. Aristotle was no more (and no less) Mr. Wells's Aristotle than Julius Cæsar was Mommsen's Cæsar. I am a Great Man myself; and I know.

PERPLEXITIES. By Henry E. Dudeney.

620.—THE SWITCH PUZZLE.

THIS is a little puzzle that the late Sam Loyd sent me some twenty-six years ago. A four-armed box, somewhat resembling a railway switch, contains twelve movable blocks. The long arms will just hold nine blocks and the short arms two blocks, with room for one at the crossing. Select a word of twelve letters, and place one letter on each of the blocks, so that the word will read correctly from left to right. Then, in the fewest possible moves, slide the blocks into the other arms of the box, so that the word will read correctly from the top to the bottom of the box. A "move" is the sliding of one letter any distance within the box, whether you turn a corner or not. Of course, the blocks



may not be taken out of the box, so there are no leaping moves. Copy the switch on a piece of paper, and use counters or pieces of cardboard for the blocks. First select your word (an important point), and then find the fewest possible moves to readjust it.

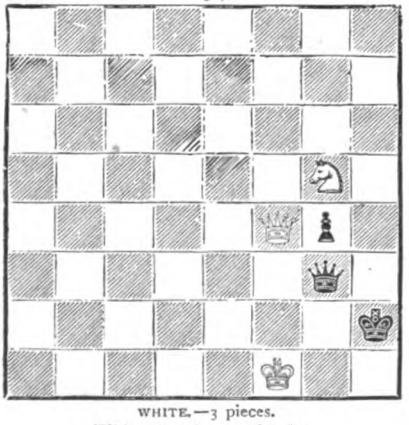
621.—A RISING POLITICIAN.

A CORRESPONDENT (P. H. W.), inspired by our No. 609, sends me the following excellent missing words puzzle. Each missing word contains as many letters as there are dots, a new letter being added at every step, like a, at, act, cart, track, etc.

"Yes, . think he . . a great man, . . ., and that he will . . . . to take the . . . . . of Government, helping to revise many Acts of Parliament. For he will . . . . . of . . . . . in the Statute Book, and, by the . . . . . of faulty clauses, he will improve our laws."

622.—AN END-GAME.

BLACK.—3 pieces.



WHITE.—3 pieces.

White to play and win.

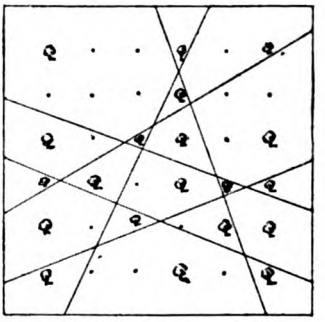
THIS curious end-game, by the Rev. H. Bolton, will be found very pretty and instructive. White can actually mate on the eleventh move. How is it possible to do so if Black makes the best moves all the time?

623.—FIND THE COINS.

THREE men, Abel, Best, and Crewe, possessed money, all in silver coins. Abel had one coin fewer than Best and one more than Crewe. Abel gave Best and Crewe as much money as they already had, then Best gave Abel and Crewe the same amount of money as they then held, and finally Crewe gave Abel and Best as much money as they then had. Each man then held exactly ten shillings. To find what amount each man started with is not difficult. But the sting of the puzzle is in the tail. Each man held exactly the *same coins* (the fewest possible) amounting to ten shillings. What were the coins and how were they originally distributed?

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

615.—A PLANTATION PUZZLE.



THE illustration explains itself. The six straight fences are so drawn that every one of the twenty trees has a separate enclosure.

616.—A WORD SQUARE.

L A S H E S
A R T E R Y
S T O R M S
H E R M I T
E R M I N E
S Y S T E M

617.—THE NEW FLAG.

FIRST, 3 different colours can be selected from 10 in 120 different ways, and these can be permuted in $6 \times 120 = 720$ different ways, but half of these would give the other half by reversal. So with 3 colours the flag could be made in 360 ways. Secondly, 2 colours can be selected in 45 ways. The colour that appears once only may be in the middle, which would give $2 \times 45 = 90$ ways. If the colour that appears once only were in the first place there would also be $2 \times 45 = 90$ ways, and this will include by reversal all the cases where it is in the third place. Therefore there are 180 cases with 2 colours. Thirdly, 1 colour can be selected in 10 ways, and will only produce 10 flags. Finally, $360 + 180 + 10 = 550$ is the total number of different flags before flying, though they can be flown in as many as 1,000 different ways.

618.—PUZZLES IN A GARDEN.

THE garden bed must have been 14ft. long and 10ft. in width. The number of years of the lease that had expired was 54.

619.—A CHARADE.

THE word is LARK-SPUR.

The DELAYED EXIT OF CLAUDE AND EUSTACE

BY

P. G. WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY A. WALLIS MILLS

THE feeling I had when Aunt Agatha trapped me in my lair that morning and spilled the bad news was that my luck had broken at last. As a rule, you see, I'm not lugged into family rows. On the occasions when Aunt is calling to Aunt like mastodons bellowing across primeval swamps and Uncle James's letter about Cousin Mabel's peculiar behaviour is being shot round the family circle ("Please read this carefully and send it on to Jane,") the clan has a tendency to ignore me. It's one of the advantages I get from being a bachelor—and, according to my nearest and dearest, practically a half-witted bachelor at that. "It's no good trying to get Bertie to take the slightest interest" is more or less the slogan, and I'm bound to say I'm all for it. A quiet life is what I like. And that's why I felt that the curse had come upon me, so to speak, when Aunt Agatha sailed into my sitting-room while I was having a placid cigarette and started to tell me about Claude and Eustace.

I rather fancy I've touched on Claude and Eustace before in these little reminiscences of mine. My cousins, if you remember. Was at school with them when they were kids, and saved them from being sacked on no fewer than three separate occasions. Since they've been up at Oxford I haven't seen so much of them, but what I have seen has been quite tolerably sufficient. Bright lads, mind you, but a trifle too much for a fellow like me who wants to jog along peacefully through life.

"Thank goodness," said Aunt Agatha, "arrangements have at last been made about Eustace and Claude."

"Arrangements?" I said, not having the foggiest.

"They sail on Friday for South Africa. Mr. Van Alstyne, a friend of poor Emily's, has given them berths in his firm at Johannesburg, and we are hoping that they will settle down there and do well."

I didn't get the thing at all.

"Friday? The day after to-morrow, do you mean?"

"Yes."

"For South Africa?"

"Yes. They leave on the *Edinburgh Castle*."

"But what's the idea? I mean, aren't they in the middle of their term at Oxford?"

Aunt Agatha looked at me coldly.

"Do you positively mean to tell me, Bertie, that you take so little interest in the affairs of your nearest relatives that you are not aware that Claude and Eustace were expelled from Oxford over a fortnight ago?"

"No, really?"

"You are hopeless, Bertie. I should have thought that even you——"

"Why were they sent down?"

"They poured lemonade on the Junior Dean of their college. . . . I see nothing amusing in the outrage, Bertie."

"No, no, rather not," I said, hurriedly "I wasn't laughing. Choking. Got something stuck in my throat, you know."

"Poor Emily," went on Aunt Agatha, "being one of those doting mothers who are the ruin of their children, wished to keep the boys in London. She suggested that they might cram for the Army. But I was firm. The Colonies are the only place for wild youths like Eustace and Claude. So they sail on Friday. They have been staying for the last two weeks with your uncle Clive

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in Worcestershire. They will spend to-morrow night in London and catch the boat-train on Friday morning."

"Bit risky, isn't it? I mean, aren't they apt to cut loose a bit to-morrow night if they're left all alone in London?"

"They will not be alone. They will be in your charge."

"Mine!"

"Yes. I wish you to put them up in your flat for the night, and see that they do not miss the train in the morning."

"Oh, I say, no!"

"Bertie!"

"Well, I mean, quite jolly coves both of them, but I don't know—— They're rather nuts, you know. Always glad to see them, of course, but when it comes to putting them up for the night——"

"Bertie, if you are so sunk in callous self-indulgence that you cannot even put yourself to this trifling inconvenience for the sake of——"

"Oh, all right," I said. "All right."

It was no good arguing, of course. Aunt Agatha always makes me feel as if I had gelatine where my spine ought to be. She's one of those forceful females. I should think Queen Elizabeth must have been something like her. When she holds me with her glittering eye and says, "Jump to it, my lad," or words to that effect, I make it so without further discussion.

When she had gone I rang for Jeeves to break the news to him.

"Oh, Jeeves," I said, "Mr. Claude and Mr. Eustace will be staying here to-morrow night."

"Very good, sir."

"I'm glad you think so. To me the outlook seems black and scaly. You know what those two lads are!"

"Very high-spirited young gentlemen, sir."

"Blisters, Jeeves. Undeniable blisters. It's a bit thick!"

"Would there be anything further, sir?"

At that, I'm bound to say, I drew myself up a trifle haughtily. We Woosters freeze like the dickens when we seek sympathy and meet with cold reserve. I knew what was up, of course. For the last day or so there had been a certain amount of coolness in the home over a pair of jazz spats which I had dug up while exploring in the Burlington Arcade. Some dashed brainy cove, probably the chap who invented those coloured cigarette-cases, had recently had the rather topping idea of putting out a line of spats on the same system. I mean to say, instead of the ordinary grey and white, you can now get them in your regimental or school colours. And, believe me, it would have taken a chappie of stronger fibre than I am to resist the pair of Old Etonian spats which had smiled up at me from inside the window. I was inside the shop, opening negotiations, before it had even occurred to me that Jeeves might not approve. And I must say he had taken the thing a bit hardly. The fact of the matter is, Jeeves, though in many ways the best valet in London, is too conservative. Hide-bound, if you know what I mean, and an enemy to Progress.

"Nothing further, Jeeves," I said, with quiet dignity.

"Very good, sir."

He gave one frosty look at the spats and biffed off. Dash him!

ANYTHING merrier and brighter than the twins, when they curveted into the old flat while I was dressing for dinner the next night, I have never struck in my whole puff. I'm only about half-a-dozen years older than Claude and Eustace, but in some rummy manner they always make me feel as if I were well on in the grandfather class and just waiting for the end. Almost before I realized they were in the place they had collared the best chairs, pinched a couple of my special cigarettes, poured themselves out a whisky-and-soda apiece, and started to prattle with the gaiety and abandon of two birds who had achieved their life's ambition instead of having come a most frightful purler and being under sentence of exile.

"Hallo, Bertie, old thing!" said Claude. "Jolly decent of you to put us up."

"Oh, no," I said. (Always the gentleman.) "Only wish you were staying a good long time."

"Hear that, Eustace? He wishes we were staying a good long time."

"I expect it will seem a good long time," said Eustace, philosophically.

"You heard about the binge, Bertie? Our little bit of trouble, I mean?"

"Oh, yes. Aunt Agatha was telling me."

"We leave our country for our country's good," said Eustace.

"And let there be no moaning at the bar," said Claude, "when I put out to sea. What did Aunt Agatha tell you?"

"She said you poured lemonade on the Junior Dean."

"I wish the deuce," said Claude, annoyed, "that people would get these things right. It wasn't the Junior Dean. It was the Senior Tutor."

"And it wasn't lemonade," said Eustace. "It was soda-water. The dear old thing happened to be standing just under our window while I was leaning out with a siphon in my hand. He looked up, and—well, it would have been chucking away the oppor-

tunity of a lifetime if I hadn't let him have it in the eyeball."

"Simply chucking it away," agreed Claude.

"Might never have occurred again," said Eustace.

"Hundred to one against it," said Claude.

"Now what," said Eustace, "do you propose to do, Bertie, in the way of entertaining the handsome guests to-night?"

"My idea was to have a bite of dinner in the flat," I said. "Jeeves is getting it ready now."

"And afterwards?"

"Well, I thought we might chat of this and that, and then it struck me that you would probably like to turn in early, as your train goes about ten or something, doesn't it?"

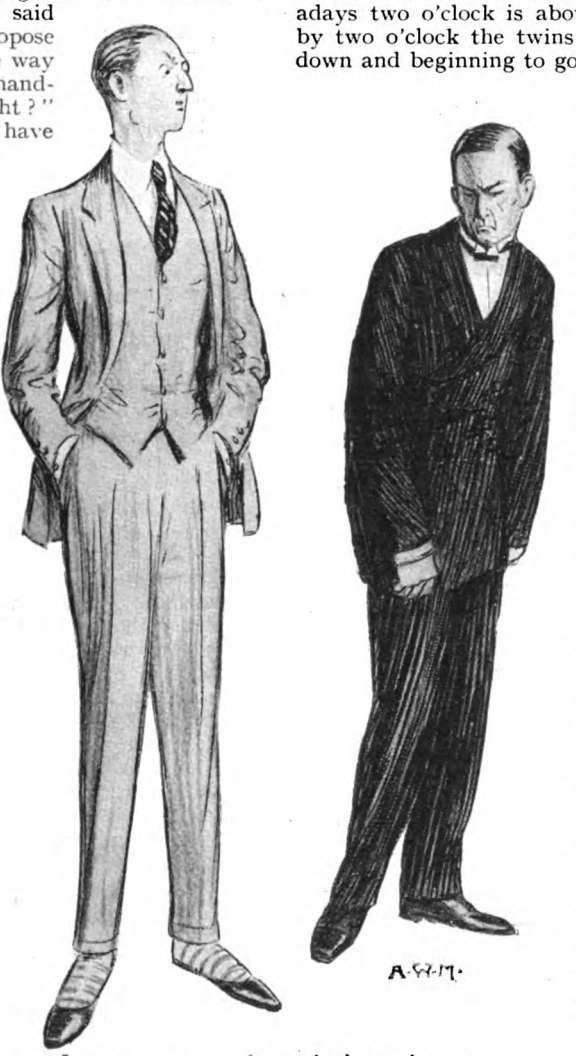
The twins gazed at each other in a pitying sort of way.

"Bertie," said Eustace, "you've got the programme nearly right, but not quite. I envisage the evening's events thus. We will toddle along to Ciro's after dinner. It's an extension night, isn't it? Well, that will see us through till about two-thirty or three."

"After which, no doubt," said Claude, "the Lord will provide."

"But I thought you would want to get a good night's rest."

"Good night's rest!" said Eustace. "My dear old chap, you don't for a moment imagine that we are dreaming of going to *bed* to-night, do you?"



Jeeves gave one frosty look at the spats and biffed off.

I SUPPOSE the fact of the matter is, I'm not the man I was. I mean, these all-night vigils don't seem to fascinate me as they used to a few years ago. I can remember the time, when I was up at Oxford, when a Covent Garden ball till six in the morning, with breakfast at the Hammams and probably a free fight with a few selected costermongers to follow, seemed to me what the doctor ordered. But nowadays two o'clock is about my limit; and by two o'clock the twins were just settling down and beginning to go nicely. As far as I can remember, we went on from Ciro's to play chemmy with some fellows I don't recall having met before, and it must have been about nine in the morning when we fetched up again at the flat. By which time, I'm bound to admit, as far as I was concerned, the first careless freshness was beginning to wear off a bit. In fact, I'd got just enough strength to say good-bye to the twins, wish them a pleasant voyage and a happy and successful career in South Africa, and stagger into bed. The last I remember was hearing the blighters chanting like larks under the cold shower, breaking off from time to time to shout to Jeeves to rush along the eggs and bacon.

IT must have been about one in the afternoon when I woke. I was feeling more or less like something the Pure Food Committee had rejected, but there was one bright thought which cheered me up, and that was that about now the twins would be leaning on the rail of the liner, taking their last glimpse of the dear old homeland. Which made it all the more of a shock when the door opened and Claude walked in.

"Hallo, Bertie!" said Claude. "Had a nice refreshing sleep? Now, what about a good old bite of lunch?"

I'd been having so many distorted nightmares since I had dropped off to sleep that for half a minute I thought this was simply one more of them, and the worst of the lot. It was only when Claude sat down on my feet that I got on to the fact that this was stern reality.

"Great Scot! What on earth are you doing here?" I gurgled.

Claude looked at me reproachfully.

"Hardly the tone I like to hear in a host, Bertie," he said, reprovingly. "Why, it was only last night that you were saying you wished I was stopping a good long time. Your dream has come true. I am!"

"But why aren't you on your way to South Africa?"

"Now that," said Claude, "is a point I rather thought you would want to have explained. It's like this, old man. You remember that girl you introduced me to at Ciro's last night?"

"Which girl?"

"There was only one," said Claude, coldly. "Only one that counted, that is to say. Her name was Marion Wardour. I danced with her a good deal, if you remember."

I BEGAN to recollect in a hazy sort of way. Marion Wardour has been a pal of mine for some time. A very good sort. She's playing in that show at the Apollo at the moment. I remembered now that she had been at Ciro's with a party the night before, and the twins had insisted on being introduced.

"We are soul-mates, Bertie," said Claude. "I found it out quite early in the p.m., and the more thought I've given to the matter the more convinced I've become. It happens like that now and then, you know. Two hearts that beat as one, I mean, and all that sort of thing. So the long and the short of it is that I gave old Eustace the slip at Waterloo and slid back here. The idea of going to South Africa and leaving a girl like that in England doesn't appeal to me a bit. I'm all for thinking imperially and giving the Colonies a leg-up and all that sort of thing; but it can't be done. After all," said Claude, reasonably, "South Africa has got along all right without me up till now, so why shouldn't it stick it?"

"But what about Van Alstyne, or whatever his name is? He'll be expecting you to turn up."

"Oh, he'll have Eustace. That'll satisfy him. Very sound fellow, Eustace. Probably end up by being a magnate of some kind. I shall watch his future progress with considerable interest. And now you must excuse me for a moment, Bertie. I want to go and hunt up Jeeves and get him to mix me one of those pick-me-ups of his. For some reason which I can't explain, I've got a slight headache this morning."

And, believe me or believe me not, the door had hardly closed behind him when in blew Eustace with a shining morning face that made me ill to look at.

"Oh, my aunt!" I said.

Eustace started to giggle pretty freely.

"Smooth work, Bertie, smooth work!" he said. "I'm sorry for poor old Claude, but there was no alternative. I eluded his vigilance at Waterloo and snaked off in a taxi. I suppose the poor old ass is wondering where the deuce I've got to. But it couldn't be helped. If you really seriously expected me to go slogging off to South Africa, you shouldn't have introduced me to Miss Wardour last night. I want to tell you all about that, Bertie. I'm not a man," said Eustace, sitting down on the bed, "who falls in love with every girl he sees. I suppose 'strong, silent' would be the best description you could find for me. But when I do meet my affinity I don't waste time. I——"

"Oh, heavens! Are you in love with Marion Wardour, too?"

"Too? What do you mean, 'too'?"

I was going to tell him about Claude, when the blighter came in in person, looking like a giant refreshed. There's no doubt that Jeeves's pick-me-ups will produce immediate results in anything short of an Egyptian mummy. It's something he puts in them—the Worcester sauce or something. Claude had revived like a watered flower, but he nearly had a relapse when he saw his bally brother goggling at him over the bed-rail.

"What on earth are you doing here?" he said.

"What on earth are *you* doing here?" said Eustace.

"Have you come back to inflict your beastly society upon Miss Wardour?"

"Is that why you've come back?"

They thrashed the subject out a bit further.

"Well," said Claude, at last, "I suppose it can't be helped. If you're here, you're here. May the best man win!"

"Yes, but dash it all!" I managed to put in at this point. "What's the idea? Where do you think you're going to stay if you stick on in London?"

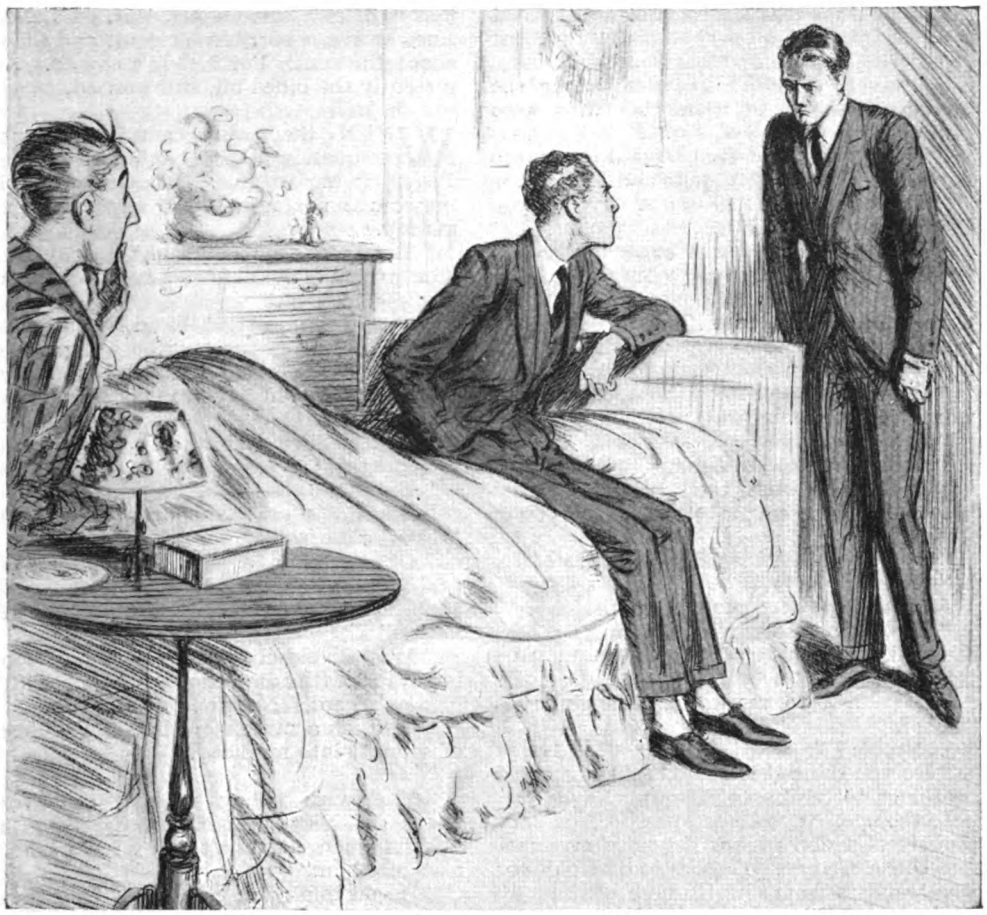
"Why, here," said Eustace, surprised.

"Where else?" said Claude, raising his eyebrows.

"You won't object to putting us up, Bertie?" said Eustace.

"Not a sportsman like you," said Claude.

"But, you silly asses, suppose Aunt



Claude nearly had a relapse when he saw his bally brother goggling at him over the bed-rail.

Agatha finds out that I'm hiding you when you ought to be in South Africa ? Where do I get off ? "

" Where *does* he get off ? " Claude asked Eustace.

" Oh, I expect he'll manage somehow," said Eustace to Claude.

" Of course," said Claude, quite cheered up. " *He'll* manage."

" Rather ! " said Eustace. " A resourceful chap like Bertie ! Of course he will."

" And now," said Claude, shelving the subject, " what about that bite of lunch we were discussing a moment ago, Bertie ? That stuff good old Jeeves slipped into me just now has given me what you might call an appetite. Something in the nature of six chops and a batter pudding would about meet the case, I think."

I suppose every chappie in the world has black periods in his life to which he can't look back without the smouldering eye and the silent shudder. Some coves, if you can judge by the novels you read nowadays, have them practically all the time ; but, what with enjoying a sizable private income and a topping digestion, I'm bound to say it isn't very often I find my own existence getting a flat tyre. That's why this particular epoch is one that I don't think about more often than I can help. For the days that followed the unexpected resurrection of the blighted twins were so absolutely foul that the old nerves began to stick out of my body a foot long and curling at the ends. All of a twitter, believe me. I imagine the fact of the matter is that we Woosters are so frightfully honest and open and all that, that it gives us the pip to have to deceive.

All was quiet along the Potomac for about twenty-four hours, and then Aunt Agatha trickled in to have a chat. Twenty minutes earlier and she would have found the twins gaily shoving themselves outside a couple of rashers and an egg. She sank into a chair,

and I could see that she was not in her usual sunny spirits.

"Bertie," she said, "I am uneasy."

So was I. I didn't know how long she intended to stop, or when the twins were coming back.

"I wonder," she said, "if I took too harsh a view towards Claude and Eustace."

"You couldn't."

"What do you mean?"

"I—er—mean it would be so unlike you to be harsh to anybody, Aunt Agatha." And not bad, either. I mean, quick—like that—without thinking. It pleased the old relative, and she looked at me with slightly less loathing than she usually does.

"It is nice of you to say that, Bertie, but what I was thinking was, are they *safe?*"

"Are they *what?*"

It seemed such a rummy adjective to apply to the twins, they being about as innocuous as a couple of sprightly young tarantulas.

"Do you think all is well with them?"

"How do you mean?"

Aunt Agatha eyed me almost wistfully.

"Has it ever occurred to you, Bertie," she said, "that your Uncle George may be psychic?"

She seemed to me to be changing the subject.

"Psychic?"

"Do you think it is possible that he could *see* things not visible to the normal eye?"

I thought it dashed possible, if not probable. I don't know if you've ever met my Uncle George. He's a festive old egg who wanders from club to club continually having a couple with other festive old eggs. When he heaves in sight, waiters brace themselves up and the wine-steward toys with his corkscrew. It was my Uncle George who discovered that alcohol was a food well in advance of modern medical thought.

"Your Uncle George was dining with me last night, and he was quite shaken. He declares that, while on his way from the Devonshire Club to Boodle's, he suddenly saw the phantasm of Eustace."

"The what of Eustace?"

"The phantasm. The wraith. It was so clear that he thought for an instant that it was Eustace himself. The figure vanished round a corner, and when Uncle George got there nothing was to be seen. It is all very queer and disturbing. It had a marked effect on poor George. All through dinner he touched nothing but barley-water, and his manner was quite disturbed. You do think those poor, dear boys are safe, Bertie? They have not met with some horrible accident?"

It made my mouth water to think of it, but I said no, I didn't think they had met with any horrible accident. I thought Eustace *was* a horrible accident, and Claude about the same, but I didn't say so. And presently she biffed off, still worried.

WHEN the twins came in, I put it squarely to the blighters. Jolly as it was to give Uncle George shocks, they must not wander at large about the metrop.

"But, my dear old soul," said Claude, "be reasonable. We can't have our movements hampered."

"Out of the question," said Eustace.

"The whole essence of the thing, if you understand me," said Claude, "is that we should be at liberty to flit hither and thither."

"Exactly," said Eustace. "Now hither, now thither."

"But, damn it——"

"Bertie!" said Eustace, reprovingly. "Not before the boy!"

"Of course, in a way I see his point," said Claude. "I suppose the solution of the problem would be to buy a couple of disguises."

"My dear old chap!" said Eustace, looking at him with admiration. "The brightest idea on record. Not your own, surely?"

"Well, as a matter of fact, it was Bertie who put it into my head."

"Me!"

"You were telling me the other day about old Bingo Little and the beard he bought when he didn't want his uncle to recognize him."

"If you think I'm going to have you two excrescences popping in and out of my flat in beards——"

"Something in that," agreed Eustace. "We'll make it whiskers, then."

"And false noses," said Claude.

"And, as you say, false noses. Right-o, then, Bertie, old chap, that's a load off your mind. We don't want to be any trouble to you while we're paying you this little visit."

And when I went buzzing round to Jeeves for consolation, all he would say was something about Young Blood. No sympathy.

"Very good, Jeeves," I said. "I shall go for a walk in the Park. Kindly put me out the Old Etonian spats."

"Very good, sir."

IT must have been a couple of days after that that Marion Wardour rolled in at about the hour of tea. She looked warily round the room before sitting down.

"Your cousins not at home, Bertie?" she said.

"No, thank goodness!"

"Then I'll tell you where they are.

They're in my sitting-room, glaring at each other from opposite corners, waiting for me to come in. Bertie, this has got to stop."

"You're seeing a good deal of them, are you?"

Jeeves came in with the tea, but the poor girl was so worked up that she didn't wait for him to pop off before going on with her complaint. She had an absolutely hunted air, poor thing.

"I can't move a step without tripping over one or both of them," she said. "Generally both. They've taken to calling together, and they just settle down grimly and try to sit each other out. It's wearing me to a shadow."

"I know," I said, sympathetically. "I know."

"Well, what's to be done?"

"It beats me. Couldn't you tell your maid to say you are not at home?"

She shuddered slightly.

"I tried that once. They camped on the stairs, and I couldn't get out all the afternoon. And I had a lot of particularly important engagements. I wish you would persuade them to go to South Africa, where they seem to be wanted."

"You must have made the dickens of an impression on them!"

"I should say I have. They've started giving me presents now. At least, Claude has. He insisted on my accepting this cigarette-case last night. Came round to the theatre and wouldn't go away till I took it. It's not a bad one, I must say."

It wasn't. It was a distinctly fruity concern in gold with a diamond stuck in the middle. And the rummy thing was that I had a notion I'd seen something very like it before somewhere. How the deuce Claude had been able to dig up the cash to buy a thing like that was more than I could imagine.

Next day was a Wednesday, and as the object of their devotion

Jeeves came in with the tea, but the poor girl was so worked up that she didn't wait for him to pop off before going on with her complaint

had a *matinée*, the twins were, so to speak, off duty. Claude had gone with his whiskers on to Hurst Park, and Eustace and I were in the flat, talking. At least, he was talking and I was wishing he would go.

"The love of a good woman, Bertie," he was saying, "must be a wonderful thing. Sometimes—— Good Lord! what's that?"

THE front door had opened, and from out in the hall there came the sound of Aunt Agatha's voice asking if I was in. Aunt Agatha has one of those high, penetrating voices, but this was the first time I'd ever been thankful for it. There was just about two seconds to clear the way for her, but it was long enough for Eustace to dive under the sofa. His last shoe had just disappeared when she came in.

She had a worried look. It seemed to me about this time that everybody had.

"Bertie," she said, "what are your immediate plans?"

"How do you mean? I'm dining to-night with——"

"No, no. I don't mean to-night. Are you busy for the next few days? But of course you are not," she went on, not waiting for me to answer. "You never have anything to do. Your whole life is spent in idle—but we can go into that later. What I came for this afternoon was to tell you that I wish you to go with your poor Uncle George to Harrogate for a few weeks. The sooner you can start, the better."

This appeared to me to approximate so closely to the frozen limit that I uttered a yelp of protest. Uncle George is all right, but he won't do. I was trying to say as much when she waved me down.

"If you are not entirely heartless, Bertie, you will do as I ask you. Your poor Uncle George has had a severe shock."

"What, another!"

"He feels that only complete rest and careful medical attendance can restore his nervous system to its normal poise. It seems that in the past he has derived benefit from taking the waters at Harrogate, and he wishes to go there now. We do not think he ought to be alone, so I wish you to accompany him."

"But, I say!"

"Bertie!"

There was a lull in the conversation.

"What shock has he had?" I asked.

"Between ourselves," said Aunt Agatha, lowering her voice in an impressive manner, "I incline to think that the whole affair was the outcome of an over-excited imagination. You are one of the family, Bertie, and I can speak freely to you. You know as well as I do that your poor Uncle George has for many years *not* been a—he has—er—developed a habit of—how shall I put it?"

"Shifting it a bit?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"Mopping up the stuff to some extent?"

"I dislike your way of putting it exceedingly, but I must confess that he has not been, perhaps, as temperate as he should. He is highly strung, and—— Well, the fact is that he has had a shock."

"Yes, but what?"

"That is what it is so hard to induce him to explain with any precision. With all his good points, your poor Uncle George is apt to become incoherent when strongly moved. As far as I could gather, he appears to have been the victim of a burglary."

"Burglary!"

"He says that a strange man with whiskers and a peculiar nose entered his rooms in Jermyn Street during his absence and stole some of his property. He says that he came back and found the man in his sitting-room. He immediately rushed out of the room and disappeared."

"Uncle George?"

"No, the man. And, according to your Uncle George, he had stolen a valuable cigarette-case. But, as I say, I am inclined to think that the whole thing was imagination. He has not been himself since the day when he fancied that he saw Eustace in the street. So I should like you, Bertie, to be prepared to start for Harrogate with him not later than Saturday."

She popped off, and Eustace crawled out from under the sofa. The blighter was strongly moved. So was I, for the matter of that. The idea of several weeks with Uncle George at Harrogate seemed to make everything go black.

"So that's where he got that cigarette-case, dash him!" said Eustace, bitterly. "Of all the dirty tricks! Robbing his own flesh and blood! The fellow ought to be in chokey."

"He ought to be in South Africa," I said. "And so ought you."

And with an eloquence which rather surprised me, I hauled up my slacks for perhaps ten minutes on the subject of his duty to his family and what not. I appealed to his sense of decency. I boosted South Africa with vim. I said everything I could think of, much of it twice over. But all the blighter did was to babble about his dashed brother's baseness in putting one over on him in the matter of the cigarette-case. He seemed to think that Claude, by slinging in the handsome gift, had got right ahead of him; and there was a painful scene when the latter came back from Hurst Park I could hear them talking half the night, long after I had tottered off to bed. I don't know when I've met fellows who could do with less sleep than those two.

AFTER this things became a bit strained at the flat, owing to Claude and Eustace not being on speaking terms. I'm all for a certain chumminess in the home, and it was wearing to have to live with two fellows who wouldn't admit that the other one was on the map at all.

One felt the thing couldn't go on like that for long, and, by Jove, it didn't. But, if anyone had come to me the day before and told me what was going to happen, I should simply have smiled wanly. I mean, I'd got so accustomed to thinking that nothing short of a dynamite explosion could ever dislodge those two nestlers from my midst that, when Claude sidled up to me on the Friday morning and told me his bit of news, I could hardly believe I was hearing right.

"Bertie," he said, "I've been thinking it over."

"What over?" I said.

"The whole thing. This business of staying in London when I ought to be in South Africa. It isn't fair," said Claude, warmly. "It isn't right. And the long and the short of it is, Bertie, old man, I'm leaving to-morrow."

I reeled in my tracks.

"You are?" I gasped.

"Yes. If," said Claude, "you won't mind sending old Jeeves out to buy a ticket for me. I'm afraid I'll have to stick you for the passage money, old man. You don't mind?"

"Mind!" I said, clutching his hand fervently.

"That's all right, then. Oh, I say, you won't say a word to Eustace about this, will you?"

"But isn't he going, too?"

Claude shuddered.

"No, thank Heaven! The idea of being cooped up on board a ship with that blighter gives me the pip just to think of it. No, not a word to Eustace. I say, I suppose you can get me a berth all right at such short notice?"

"Rather!" I said. Sooner than let this opportunity slip, I would have bought the bally boat.

"Jeeves," I said, breezing into the kitchen, "go out on first speed to the Union-Castle offices and book a berth on to-morrow's boat for Mr. Claude. He is leaving us, Jeeves."

"Yes, sir."

"Mr. Claude does not wish any mention of this to be made to Mr. Eustace."

"No, sir. Mr. Eustace made the same proviso when he desired me to obtain a berth on to-morrow's boat for himself."

I gaped at the man.

"Is he going, too?"

"Yes, sir."

"This is rummy."

"Yes, sir."

Had circumstances been other than they were, I would at this juncture have unbent considerably towards Jeeves. Frisked round him a bit and whooped to a certain extent and what not. But those spats still formed a barrier, and I regret to say that I took the opportunity of rather rubbing it in a bit on the man. I mean, he'd been so dashed aloof and unsympathetic, though perfectly aware that the young master was in the soup and that it was up to him to rally round, that I couldn't help pointing out how the happy ending had been snaffled without any help from him.

"So that's that, Jeeves," I said. "The episode is concluded. I knew things would sort themselves out if one gave them time and didn't get rattled. Many chaps in my place would have got rattled, Jeeves."

"Yes, sir."

"Gone rushing about, I mean, asking people for help and advice and so forth."

"Very possibly, sir."

"But not me, Jeeves."

"No, sir."

I left him to brood on it.

EVEN the thought that I'd got to go to Harrogate with Uncle George couldn't depress me that Saturday when I gazed about the old flat and realized that Claude and Eustace weren't in it. They had slunk off stealthily and separately immediately after breakfast, Eustace to catch the boat-train at Waterloo, Claude to go round to the garage where I kept my car. I didn't want any chance of the two meeting at Waterloo and changing their minds, so I had suggested to Claude that he might find it pleasanter to drive down to Southampton.

I was lying back on the old settee, gazing peacefully up at the flies on the ceiling and feeling what a wonderful world this was, when Jeeves came in with a letter.

"A messenger-boy has brought this, sir."

I opened the envelope, and the first thing that fell out was a five-pound note.

"Great Scot!" I said. "What's all this?"

The letter was scribbled in pencil, and was quite brief:—

Dear Bertie,—Will you give enclosed to your man, and tell him I wish I could make it more. He has saved my life. This is the first happy day I've had for a week.

Yours,

M. W.

Jeeves was standing holding out the fiver, which had fluttered to the floor.

"You'd better stick to it," I said. "It seems to be for you."

"Sir?"

"I say that fiver is for you, apparently. Miss Wardour sent it."

"That was extremely kind of her, sir."

"What the dickens is she sending you fivers for? She says you saved her life."

Jeeves smiled gently.

"She over-estimates my services, sir."

"But what *were* your services, dash it?"

"It was in the matter of Mr. Claude and Mr. Eustace, sir. I was hoping that she would not refer to the matter, as I did not wish you to think that I had been taking a liberty."

"What do you mean?"

"I chanced to be in the room while Miss Wardour was complaining with some warmth of the manner in which Mr. Claude and Mr. Eustace were thrusting their society upon her. I felt that in the circumstances it might be excusable if I suggested a slight ruse to enable her to dispense with their attentions."

"Good Lord! You don't mean to say you were at the bottom of their popping off, after all?"

Silly ass it made me feel. I mean, after rubbing it into him like that about having clicked without his assistance.

"It occurred to me that, were Miss Wardour to inform Mr. Claude and Mr. Eustace independently that she proposed sailing for South Africa to take up a theatrical engagement, the desired effect might be produced. It appears that my anticipations were correct, sir. The young gentlemen ate it, if I may use the expression."

"Jeeves," I said—we Woosters may make bloomers, but we are never too proud to admit it—"you stand alone!"

"Thank you very much, sir."

"Oh, but I say!" A ghastly thought had struck me. "When they get on the boat and find she isn't there, won't they come buzzing back?"

"I anticipated that possibility, sir. At my suggestion, Miss Wardour informed the young gentlemen that she proposed to travel overland to Madeira and join the vessel there."

"And where do they touch after Madeira?"

"Nowhere, sir."

FOR a moment I just lay back, letting the idea of the thing soak in. There seemed to me to be only one flaw.

"The only pity is," I said, "that on a large boat like that they will be able to avoid each other. I mean, I should have liked to feel that Claude was having a good deal of Eustace's society, and *vice versâ*."

"I fancy that that will be so, sir. I secured a two-berth stateroom. Mr. Claude will occupy one berth, Mr. Eustace the other."

I sighed with pure ecstasy. It seemed a dashed shame that on this joyful occasion I should have to go off to Harrogate with my Uncle George.

"Have you started packing yet, Jeeves?" I asked.

"Packing, sir?"

"For Harrogate. I've got to go there to-day with Sir George."

"Of course, yes, sir. I forgot to mention it. Sir George rang up on the telephone this morning while you were still asleep, and said that he had changed his plans. He does not intend to go to Harrogate."

"Oh, I say, how absolutely topping!"

"I thought you might be pleased, sir."

"What made him change his plans? Did he say?"

"No, sir. But I gather from his man, Stevens, that he is feeling much better and does not now require a rest-cure. I took the liberty of giving Stevens the recipe for that pick-me-up of mine, of which you have always approved so much. Stevens tells me that Sir George informed him this morning that he is feeling a new man."

Well, there was only one thing to do, and I did it. I'm not saying it didn't hurt, but there was no alternative.

"Jeeves," I said, "those spats."

"Yes, sir?"

"You really dislike them?"

"Intensely, sir."

"You don't think time might induce you to change your views?"

"No, sir."

"All right, then. Very well. Say no more. You may burn them."

"Thank you very much, sir. I have already done so. Before breakfast this morning. A quiet grey is far more suitable, sir. Thank you, sir."

Next month: "Bingo and the Little Woman."

WAS HE JUSTIFIED?

by

AUSTIN PHILIPS

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN CAMPBELL

"GOOD day, Mr. Strawson!"

"Good day, Merreweather!"

"A wonderful season, sir!"

"Yes. We're beating the Germans to a standstill. Saltwich is made by the war!"

The manager resumed the counting of the day's takings in the little circular plate-glass-windowed box which he occupied in the oak-panelled atrium; James Charles Merreweather, brine-baths attendant and masseur, walked across the gardens to the road. He went, swiftly, past the ancient white-walled, black-beamed hostelry called the Woolpack and entered the charming little park.

It was Thursday afternoon, and the baths had closed a trifle earlier. That was why he had come in. The local orchestra was performing in the circular terra-cotta-roofed bandstand. Tired with much standing, and hungry for fresh air after hours of confinement in a steamy, salt-laden atmosphere, James Charles Merreweather sat down, to enjoy himself thoroughly for an hour or so, on one of the solid garden-settles which edged the shaven central lawn.

Music, it is said, calls to each man's strongest passion: be this false or true, at this moment music stirred up Merreweather's pride. And with reason. He had done something—done something trebly worth the doing. He had fallen to the depths and, seemingly past saving, had redeemed himself, had gnawed by sheer grit a brave passage through the nets of environment and Fate.

To-day he was happy, light of heart, and full in pocket—the favoured attendant and masseur of the management, the deputed, whenever it was possible, to attend upon the prominent and rich. Yesterday—that is to say, in pre-war days—he had been the cat's-paw and vassal of a gang of European scoundrels. They had held him tied by bonds of starkest terror. They could have had him—though no murderer—guillotined.

The great world-disaster, then, had saved him. He had rushed to England, to enlist. Wounded, he had been sent to convalesce at Saltwich. There, when discharged, he had remained. Employed, at first, on odd jobs about the baths such as a shell-shaken soldier might manage, he had recovered and gained permanent engagement. He was making money fast. He was married. He adored his wife and daughter. Once an outcast and a pariah, he had Peace.

And, having Peace, he loved it and prized it as only those who have known Unrest can love and prize it—and he knew no troubling fears. He had lived so long immune. France and its police had forgotten him. His swell-mobsmen ex-masters had been sundered and parted by war-service. In all probability they were dead.

Thus, then, James Charles Merreweather, brine-baths attendant and masseur, sat on in the mid-September sunshine, one of the happiest men in this unhappy world. His soul was filled with pride. His being thrilled with contentment. His heart—a staunch and loyal heart despite his forced association with that gang of polished criminals—was warm with well-being and affection. Up at home were "the little things he cared about" and had striven for and would work for while muscle-power endured.

He sat on, infinitely happy, with his masseur's handbag beside him, thinking of home, just upon the point of seeking it, yet delaying to set out there as one who, having things delicious, delays for a little space to taste. He was thinking of his wife, very tenderly. His year-old daughter's image conjured up affection unspeakable. How much the two of them meant to him! What he would do for that baby! She should have chances presently that had never been her father's: chances of equipment, education, outlook, advancement in the world.

And, even as he pondered and foresaw his loved one's future with a kind of passionate exaltation, something occurred to cut his thoughts. It was a dark shadow caused by

the passage just in front of him of some person on the shaven velvet grass.

He looked up. He started back in horror. He sat staring, even as one gorgonized, at the face and figure that he saw.

It was a man—immense and almost mountainous, whose eyes were pig-like, whose chins were treble and fourfold, and whose neck hung down upon an old-fashioned "Shakespeare" collar in pendulous rolls of flesh. He stood smiling—smiling evilly, calmly, and ominously—at the masseur, whose mouth was open now, and whose jaw was dropped and rigid, and whose hand had gone to his small bag instinctively, as though afraid of its theft.

"Well met, my little one!" said the other with a markedly cosmopolitan accent and in a voice whose immense volume of sound he controlled like one trained for opera. "So I have found you, unexpected. What are you doing, Shimmie, in this far-away place?"

Merreweather did not answer. His jaw came to with a snap. His shoulders stiffened squarely. The new-comer laughed—with his eyes.

"Is it necessary that I demand your name of the police, *mon gars?*" he asked, softly.

"Yes, if you like." Merreweather's voice and manner had the poise and courage which had come to him through leading a clean, good life these seven years past, and from standing not in vassalage but on his own. "Yes—if you care to risk it. They know everything about me—who I am and where I work!"

"*Everything* about you?"

"Yes."

"Everything that *I* know?"

THERE was a minute of utter silence. In it Merreweather's manner underwent a sensible change. It held at first defiance. Then doubt showed in it. Fear followed after—and soon the beginning of despair.

"Suppose," said the big man, slowly—he was sitting now on the seat beside the masseur and was looking at him with eyes which, though pig-like, seemed to have upon Merreweather something of the effect of a serpent's—"suppose I told them what I know—that you are not merely a worker at the baths—*that* much your brine-bleached hands speak clearly; suppose I tell them that before you joined the British Army (that, too, your shoulders say of you!) you belonged to a company of *escrocs*. Suppose I told them you were a murderer——"

"It's a lie!"

"You would have to prove it a lie, Shimmie—in France, *mon ami*, where a man has to prove himself innocent or, p-s-s-st, La Guillotine! Have you forgotten that night at Montreuil-sur-Mer, on the ramparts——"

"S-s-s-h!"

The huge man smiled and shrugged his shoulders. Then, for a second, he looked round. There was no one close to them. Most of the company were seated, save for a few who were promenading on the path which skirted the lawn.

"I will remind you," he said, quietly, in that strange full voice of his which gave so great an impression of withheld and well-controlled volume. "What precisely happened at Montreuil-sur-Mer was this.

"A certain retired professor of the Sorbonne, named Lemesurier, was murdered there by certain members of a famous company of European thieves. They were conveyed to his house by a car driven by a man named Shimmie Merreweather, who waited in the street while they opened the *porte cochère* with a key which had been furnished them—there was no concierge, for the professor, who was rich, was economical—and they made their way into the house. They began their work in the *salon*—which was full of valuable curios—and on an upper floor. The professor surprised them. He wounded one of them seriously with a sword-stick—before himself being finished. The chauffeur, Shimmie Merreweather, was called into the house to help to carry the wounded man into the car quickly, while the others packed the spoil."

"But the chauffeur had nothing to do with the murder!"

"Except that he was an accessory and liable to *travaux forcés*—and one little other thing besides. The others all wore gloves. He had taken his off—the night was hot!—while the car stood waiting, and he forgot to put them on again when he was called in to help to carry out the wounded man. When the body of the professor was found next morning there were finger-prints, *mon ami—many* finger-prints—not a few of them impressed—for it was plentiful!—on chair-backs and door-plates in red blood. The chauffeur knew it. That was why he stayed with his friends—the *escrocs*—so loyally; though he longed (they knew it) to bid adieu to them, and only ran away when war broke out and his friends were otherwise engaged!"

The speaker—monster alike in mind and body—ended, smiling, and sat looking at the miserable masseur with evil, pig-serpent eyes. Merreweather looked back at him, motionless, silent, and most piteous. Then came a flash of his real spirit—of the man who had snatched his chance and served his country and made good in civil life since.

"And if you did give me away, Mr. Cabeldu, you'd give yourself away also, and the others likewise. You can't bluff me

like that. This is not France. It is England. I'm safe—perfectly safe!"

"Are you, *mon gars?* I think otherwise. Those who were with you are dead. The war killed them. Your mere finger-prints would convict you. I could find people to prove you drove the car to the professor's. And I! You are mad, Shimmie. I am a simple, honest *rentier*, living humbly and quietly at Chantilly. I never went near Montreuil!"

"So I have found you. What are you doing in this far-away place?"

The monster chuckled his base triumph. Merreweather's courage quite collapsed. He felt himself beaten. The other—his ex-master—had reasserted over him that amazing old-time ascendancy which came from a great personality used not for good but for evil. The unhappy masseur grew limp-like, and stammered out these words :—

"W-what do you want of me?"

"I want you to come back to me!"

"To—come—back—to—you!"

"Yes. The war destroyed our company. I am now busy in re-forming it. I need a trustworthy comrade."

"Someone whom you have a hold over!"

"Yes. *Exactement, mon ami.* You express my meaning to a hair."

"And you knew where I was—and came to fetch me!"

"Oh, no, Shimmie. That was but the happy chance. I was sent to take the waters which my physician swears are best in all Europe for the inward gout which torments me—and lo! I come from arriving and light forthwith upon a friend. It is strange. But it is a fact, *n'est-ce pas?* 'Chisel how we will, the dark vein of Destiny reappears continually,' says the old Hugo. Clearly, *mon* Shimmie, you were not intended to be an honest bourgeois. But of that to-morrow we will talk."

Cabeldu had broken off abruptly. He had noticed they were observed. A group of passers-by were staring at the couple on the white-painted garden-settle, attracted, doubtless, by the monstrous fatness of the cosmopolitan and his companion's almost dead-white face.

"Quickly!" said the villain when the two were again isolated. "You give baths to patients, I expect?"

"Yes."

"It takes long, this bathing?"

"An hour, nearly. There is twenty minutes' hot immersion, and then half an hour in warmed towels, resting, while the salt soaks in and dries."

"Each patient has his own separate bathroom?"

"Certainly."

"He can choose his own attendant?"

"If he wishes."

"Good. Then I choose Shimmie Merreweather. We will talk business while he bathes me. To-morrow, at eleven. *Au revoir!*"

The monster smiled—with his twinkling serpent-pig's eyes only—and got, with some trouble, on his feet. He strolled away towards the Woolpack, leaning heavily on his walking-stick. The masseur sat on, hunched and huddled there in starkest misery, staring blindly out across the lawn.

He saw nothing—absolutely nothing—save a future full of blackness and despair.

Not without reason had this Napoleon of criminals, Lucien Cabeldu, spoken of the dark vein of Destiny which, despite men's chiselling, reappears continually throughout the years of their existence, and which makes them seem the manikins of Fate. It was not enough that he, James Charles Merreweather, should have run away from home, half-starved by a brutal stepmother; that he should have gone round the Horn as a stowaway; that he should have won, at eighteen, a steward's post on a trans-Channel steamer, only to leave it to become the personal servant of this same Lucien Cabeldu, who, crossing to and fro, had got to know him and had seen in him just the material which he needed for a personal servant and a tool to serve his evil ends. It was not enough that he, James Charles Merreweather, encouraged to gamble at a certain *café* at the Trocadéro end of the Avenue Kléber, had lost money heavily to members of the Cabeldu coterie of mobsmen and, dunned for money, had come to work for them; it was not enough that he had—though innocent—run the risk of execution for murder, that he had seen and snatched his chance of freedom and enlisted at the outbreak of the war. It was not enough that he had suffered, striven, redeemed himself, married, become a father and given heart-whole service—he had got to go through it all once more. He had lived in a madman's Paradise. His hope of happiness was vain.

TO think better, he got up now, and unconsciously he walked towards his home. Unwittingly he reached it. Through sheer habit he drew out his latch-key. He climbed the stairs instinctively, his whole being crying out aloud for the sympathy which he felt he could not ask from his wife. He had never told her of his past, and he felt he could not tell her; but he ached to be with her, to be rested, to get from her mere presence peace.

He found her in the little nursery, giving their daughter a bath. With her dark, middle-parted hair, her straight nose, her Mona Lisa mouth, her beautifully-formed body, and her white and shapely forearms, she had the air of coming from such canvases as he had seen at the Louvre sometimes. The child, bright-eyed, full of animation, was shouting with delight; kicking out and splashing joyously. James Charles Merreweather stood looking, dumb and piteous, at these two beings who had given him, at last, an outlet for his great but long-inhibited tenderness, and from whom he must, within a fortnight, part.

"Isn't she lovely, daddy?" said his wife, who was quite well-spoken and intelligent; indeed, she was the youngest daughter of the

assistant local schoolmaster. "Aren't you proud of your girl?"

Merreweather nodded and stood looking at them; then suddenly stooped and kissed his baby, putting his arm round the soft flesh of the tender and charming little body, taking a tiny hand in his own big one and setting his face against the wet cheek and soapy head. "Kiss me, Margaret!" he said, in a voice which was trembling with emotion. And, as the child obeyed, a cry from the very innermost depths of him shouted, clamoured, insisted, "I cannot, I will not lose you. I *must*, I *will* find a way!"

"Aren't you going to kiss *me*, James?" his wife asked him, reproachfully.

He swung round and caught her to him. He held her closely, and yet it was not passionately, but rather as it might be with a terrible and very tender fear. When he released her she looked at him rather wonderingly. Then she took a kettle from a gas-ring and poured more hot water into the bath.

"We must give baby the right temperature, and no *more* than the right temperature," she said smiling, and added some cold afterwards. "We don't want to do the Sharples deed, do we, daddy? She's far, far too precious!" And, even as her laughing sentence ended, James Charles Merreweather started as one who has been stung.

He lingered in the nursery for a minute or two. Then he went downstairs. In their little parlour, whose bay window overlooked green meadows, he began to pace the carpet. From his heart there came one cry filled with anguish, fierce, incessant. "I cannot, I will not lose you. I must, *shall* find a way."

And the wraith of a way—shapeless as yet, but already fearful and horrific—began increasingly to haunt him, *had* begun, indeed, some minutes earlier, born of his wife's laughing sentence and "the association of ideas." "The Sharples deed!" How it conjured up possibilities. But to conceive is one thing. To act is another—and such an act as that!

ALWAYS searching and thinking, he continued striding the carpet. He went out into the living-room when his wife called to him, presently. A simple supper was set for him; for he dined in the middle of the day.

And as he ate he watched with passionate tenderness the exquisitely-formed body and beautiful oval face of the little dark woman who had given him peace and happiness, who was the model wife and mother, who knew, and practised to perfection, the ideal *métier de femme*. A new courage had birth in him. In the presence of the Napoleon of crime, Lucien Cabeldu, he had let his old-time habit of servitude make him weakling—but he felt, now, stronger than before.

And in his head two things were ever surging: one of them that tremendous, staggering thought which his wife had uttered upstairs less than three-quarters of an hour ago: "We don't want to do the Sharples deed, do we, daddy?"; the other, that cry, insistent and victorious over fear, which clamoured from the midmost heart of him: "I cannot, I will not lose you. I must, I *shall* find a way!"

"Baby was very sweet to-night, Jem," said his wife as the meal ended and he was biting, all unconsciously, hard upon his pipe-stem.

"Yes, wasn't she?" he made answer, with fingers drumming on the table-cloth.

"I think she is clever. Don't you, darling?"

"I'm sure she is, Miriam."

"I think she's got music in her—real music. Of course, her other education comes first, but if she shows any aptitude I should like her taught the violin. If all goes well, you'll be able to retire in a dozen years or so—and then we can settle in London and have her properly taught."

Merreweather nodded his answer. He could not trust himself to speak. His eyes were full of tears. He was afraid his wife would see them. And he set his elbows on the table and put his head in his hands.

In a flash Mrs. Merreweather came to him, divining that something was amiss. Her warm soft arms went round him. Her gentle cheek touched his cheek. Her lips caressed his ear.

"What's the matter, darling?" she asked, anxiously. "I thought you looked worried in the nursery. Is there some dark shadow? Has anything gone wrong?"

"No, nothing, darling one." The lie came out, quick, kind, concealing, and inevitable. "Only the heat and the confinement and the heavy, salt-laden atmosphere. I think I'll go and get some air now. Don't sit up if you are tired. I know that baby is a strain!"

He kissed her tenderly—without looking at her—and left the room hastily, with still averted face. In another couple of minutes he had left the highway and was striding through the lanes towards the open, hilly country which compassed the little Midland town.

He climbed steadily, and came presently to a certain eminence which gave a view of the country for miles round and of half the spacious Severn plain. Beneath him shone the river, meandering towards Gloucester, and in the far distance the sparkling lights of the houses on the lower slopes of the Milterns flung their challenge blithely to the

stars. It was infinitely peaceful. No man with a far-reaching choice before him had ever calmer setting in which to make his decision. James Charles Merreweather, brine-baths attendant and masseur, who had felt himself taken and trapped but three hours ago, had two possible paths before him. Born of his wife's careless words: "We don't want to do the Sharples deed, do we, daddy?" a chance of escape had come to him—a chance of that choice in which (said the old Greek slave and cripple) good and evil exist.

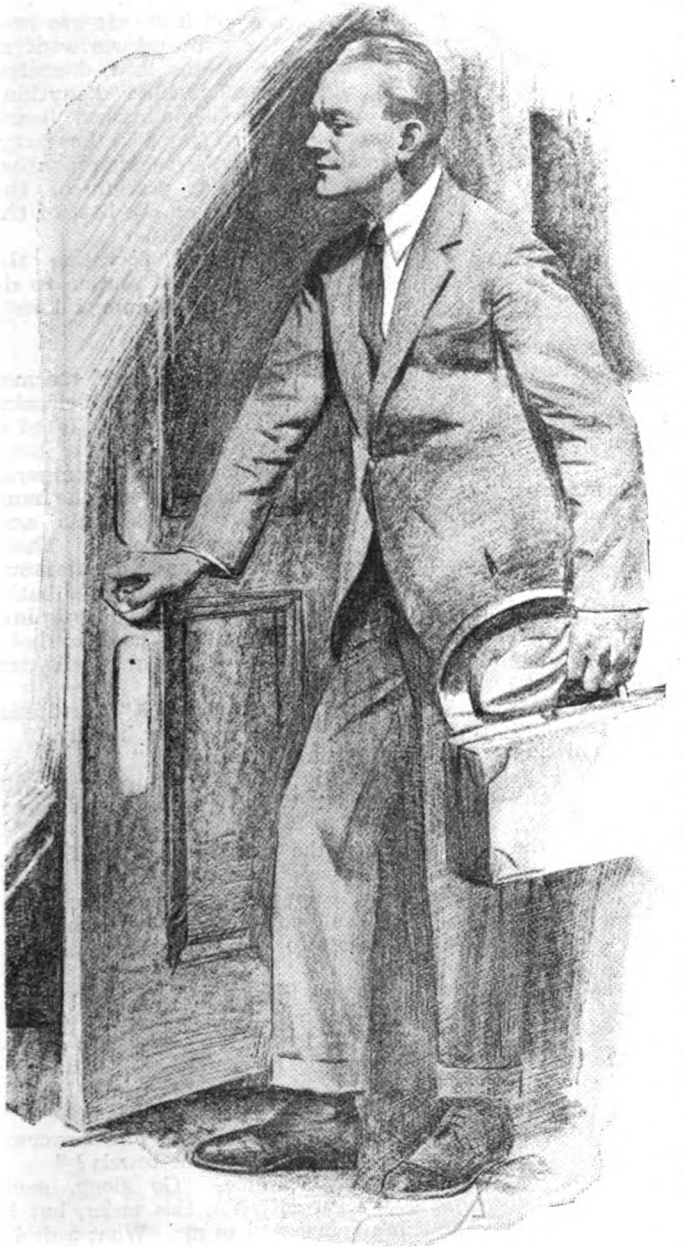
Leaning over a gate, he had things fully out with himself and put the question to the test. Where did right lie? Where did wrong lie? He had won from evil to good. Ought he to go back to wrong—or to do something men might hold more wrongful, if ever they knew—which they would not?

On one side stood his life—for all that mattered in life—his happiness, his peace, his wife and child's happiness and sure future, his power to provide for them, the education of Margaret, a pleasant passage through the years. On the other side stood return to crime, misery, unrest, a sorry conscience, the loss of his re-won *virtus*, the complete sacrifice of his soul. He *could* choose. He could have the first, provided that he acted implacably, surely, swiftly, to-morrow morning. But, acting so, having done what he contemplated doing, would he sacrifice his soul by this choice also; would he destroy his peace as by the other, and live tormented of remorse?

And as he stood there, hour after hour, leaving the gate awhile, striding the roadway, then returning, this cry kept coming—from his heart so wrung and tortured—always louder, ever more insistent: "I cannot, I will not lose you. I must find—I *have* found—a way."

"Isn't she lovely, daddy? Aren't you

Ten struck. The sound was borne up by the wind from the brine-baths clock far below him, through the deepening silence of the night. Eleven struck. Then midnight. It was one, and two nearly, before his choice was determined. Firm, fixed, decided, resolute to take the way which seemed the right way, he descended to his villa and



proud of your girl?"

entered. His wife was sleeping. His lips just touched her forehead and the fingers of his daughter's little hand.

He slept calmly, peacefully, as one sleeps whose mind is careless. This, doubtless, was because he had made decision and carking uncertainty was gone.

He rose at seven, waked by the joyful shouts of Margaret, who was standing with her hands gripping at the iron rail of her cot. He kissed her very, very tenderly. He embraced his wife affectionately. His eyes were steady; indeed, his whole expression was that of a man who is sure.

"Are you better, darling?" asked Mrs. Merreweather, presently. "Did the walk do you good? I never heard you come in again. Has the dark shadow gone?"

"Yes. The walk did me good," he answered, rather gravely. "I'm better—ever so. I tried my best not to disturb you. I'm almost my real self again. By lunch-time—almost certainly—the dark shadow will be past."

AN hour later James Charles Merreweather reached the spa buildings and duly set about his work.

About ten-thirty the manager rang for him. This is what he heard:—

"A Mr. Lucien Cabeldu has asked for you at half-past eleven. You will find him in the waiting-room or in the gardens, listening to the band."

Merreweather nodded and departed, going back to his work. He was exceedingly busy, for September is high season at Saltwich; but he kept one bathroom unused. It was slightly larger than the others—most suited to a very big man.

At eleven-twenty-five he entered it, retouched its brasses with a duster, then stood for some seconds with closed eyes. His lips moved perceptibly. It was as if he were asking for faith and strength and purpose from some invisible Power.

Then he went out into the atrium and entered the two big waiting-rooms on the right hand and on the left.

"Mr. Lucien Cabeldu!" he called in each one of them.

There was answer in neither. He proceeded to the portals of the building, where expectant

patients were sitting in the beautiful shady gardens, while the orchestra soothed them with its strains. Twenty yards away he saw his wife, who had been shopping, and who, as usual, had wheeled in the perambulator that their child might hear the music. Margaret was leaping up and down, uttering little cries, waving her hands ecstatically as one in whom rhythm is inborn.

He drew in his breath and stood looking at them. Certain words flashed across his brain. One was the laughing sentence which his wife had uttered when bathing their daughter last evening : " We mustn't do the Sharples deed, must we, daddy ? " The other was his own heart's poignant utterance : " I cannot, I will not lose you. I *must*—I *have*—found a way."

Then clearly, but quietly, unaggressively, he called out the master-villain's name.

" Mr. Lucien Cabeldu ! "

" Your bath is ready, sir," said the masseur, as his patient approached. " Will you kindly step this way ? "

The other followed him slowly, first into the blue-tiled atrium and then down the matted corridors, steam-haunted, redolent of brine. The masseur held open the door of the bathroom which he had selected. The Napoleon of criminals walked into it. In another minute the dense salt-water was pouring into the great teak receptacle, and James Charles Merreweather was unlacing his ex-master's shoes.

" Quite like the old days in the Avenue Kléber, *hein, mon ami ?* " said the monster, panting heavily after his walk along the corridor.

" Quite like them, monsieur," answered his victim, passionlessly.

" Days to come again—and quickly, Shimmie, *n'est-ce pas ?* "

" I suppose so, monsieur. Unless you will let me stay here ! "

" No, no ; you are too valuable, Shimmie. I know too much for you. You dare not be unfaithful. That is the servant I desire."

Merreweather answered nothing—only his fingers slightly trembled as he slipped off his persecutor's shoes. The bath was three-parts full now. He turned off the taps, for the time.

" May I see the doctor's card, monsieur ? " he asked, as he had asked to see ten thousand other such cards in the course of his daily duties.

" Yes. It is here." Cabeldu drew a ticket from his pocket and put it into the masseur's outstretched hand.

Merreweather looked at it carefully. It was signed by the foremost of the local doctors whom Cabeldu had consulted about treatment ; it authorized him to give the patient an immersion of twenty minutes daily, at a temperature of ninety-eight degrees. That was blood heat. It was low, very, as brine baths temperatures went at Saltwich, but the doctor had doubtless discovered that Lucien Cabeldu had anything but a strong and well-conditioned heart Indeed, it had been weak (and doubtless fatty) in pre-war days in Paris, as Merreweather was well aware of. The pressure of the brine is tremendous, and on the heat of the water a patient's life may hang.

" Very good," he said, pocketing the ticket as if it were the fixed routine to do so. " Now, in just half a minute, I'll help you to undress."

HE dropped in the teak-cased thermometer with the little semi-circular receptacle at the base of it, lifted it out, looked at it carefully, added a little more cold water, then tested the temperature once more. Seemingly satisfied, he hung the thermometer on its hook again and turned to valet Lucien Cabeldu. Three minutes later the gross and mountainous villain was being assisted into the bath. He lay there, prone, repulsive, kept immersed by the wooden bar used to hold down human bodies, which are always lighter than the brine.

" How long do I stay here ? " asked the master-villain, breathing rather heavily.

" Twenty minutes, monsieur."

" It's cursedly hot. But I suppose it will soon get cooler. What happens when I come out ? "

" You lie in the ' pack,' monsieur. That is, in the hot towels. I am going, now, to see about them. I put them on you as you leave the water, and you lie on the couch until the salt dries into you. I tried to tell you last night."

" That's good, Shimmie. And while I rest I'll talk to you and tell you a morsel of my arrangements. I shall want you with me in Paris three weeks from now—that is, a week after I have finished the cure here. I shall cross to France without delay."

" Yes, monsieur. Will you please excuse me while I go and see to the towels ? "

" All right, Shimmie. Go along, *mon enfant*. It's cursedly hot, this water, but I take it it's doing good to me. What a droll of a position ! I suppose you've no disposition to play the Charlotte Corday trick on me ? "

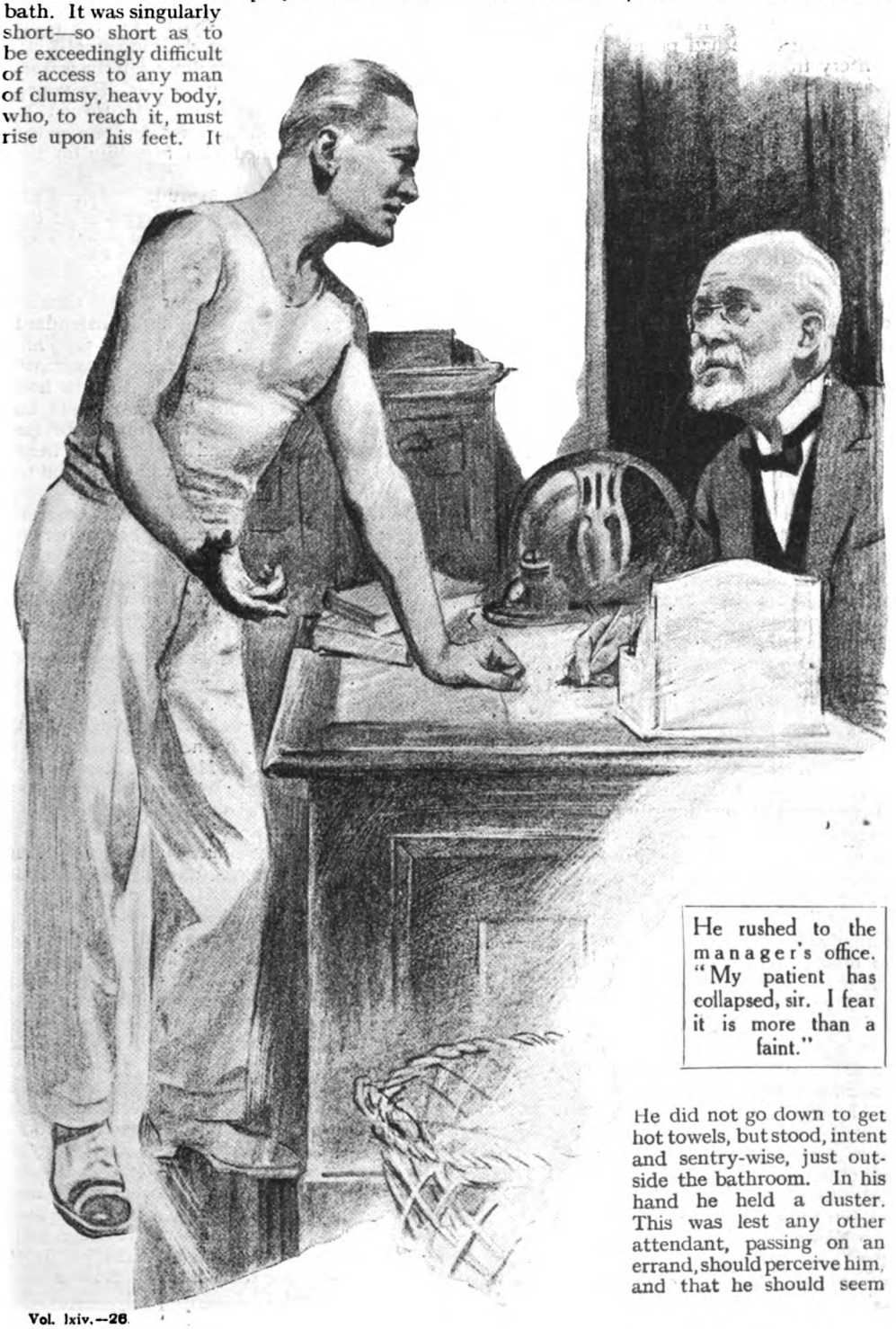
" Who was she, monsieur ? "

" Never mind, Shimmie." Lucien Cabeldu chuckled and panted and breathed still more heavily in the thick and steamy atmosphere. " Run and see to your towels. Then come back to me and talk."

The masseur nodded and inclined a little, and turned towards the door. He turned

back, before it closed on him, to cast one final glance at the monstrous body in the water and at the bell-rope just above the bath. It was singularly short—so short as to be exceedingly difficult of access to any man of clumsy, heavy body, who, to reach it, must rise upon his feet. It looked as if it had been knotted—which, in point of fact, was the case.

Merreweather passed into the corridor.



He rushed to the manager's office. "My patient has collapsed, sir. I fear it is more than a faint."

He did not go down to get hot towels, but stood, intent and sentry-wise, just outside the bathroom. In his hand he held a duster. This was lest any other attendant, passing on an errand, should perceive him, and that he should seem

about to polish up a handle or the plate of one of the doors.

But no one passed. He did not stay sentry-like long, either. It was needless. Things turned out as he had planned. He heard a half cry from the bathroom. He was aware that a heavy body sought to raise itself. He heard a gasp, a sigh, a falling. Then all was utter silence. He waited three minutes: then went in.

Lucien Cabeldu, destroyer of souls and monster villain, was lying half in and half out of the water. He was insensible, certainly. He was past all help, probably; as James Charles Merreweather was aware of, having seen death come in many fashions to many men on sundry stricken fields. He felt the pulse. He made such tests as contact with medical men had taught him, and he knew that his old-time tempter would never trouble him in future. He unknotted the bell-rope, so that it hung at normal length again, dipped in the thermometer, found it registered 105 degrees Fahrenheit, or, even allowing for the cooling which had taken place in ten minutes, a full seven degrees higher than the ticket given Cabeldu by the doctor had bade that the temperature should be. He—James Charles Merreweather—had done the "Sharples deed" which his wife's careless words had suggested to him—the deed by which (so many years back, now, as to have become almost traditional) an old half-mad masseur, born a gentleman and ruined by the breaking of a building society, had killed a financial magnate who had come to Saltwich for treatment and whose bubble schemes had ruined old Sharples, and with him those he had held dear.

The masseur stood considering the monster. He was quite extraordinarily calm. He knew no remorse. He had done the right thing—the inevitable; he knew it, deep down through his fibres. In the judgments of men he might be guilty. But not in the judgment of his God.

He turned on the cold tap rapidly; continually tested the temperature, till it dropped to ninety-six degrees. Then he rushed to the manager's office, ably simulating fear.

"My patient—Mr. Cabeldu—has collapsed, sir. He was a big man, immensely fat. I fear it is more than a faint, merely. I went to see about hot towels, and when I came back he seemed dead."

The manager rushed to the bathroom. A doctor, passing through the gardens, was hurriedly summoned to the scene. He was a young man—not the one whom Lucien Cabeldu had consulted, who was the senior man in the place!

"The poor devil *asked* for trouble with that flesh and figure," he said, shrugging sapient shoulders. "What temperature was he ordered?"

"Ninety-eight, sir," Merreweather answered.

"Have you got the card?"

"Yes, sir."

"Good! You're sure you gave the right heat? Just pass me the thermometer!"

It was passed, and was dipped in the water, and showed but ninety-six degrees. The young doctor nodded satisfaction. He turned to the masseur—whom he liked and respected greatly—and touched him friendlily on the arm.

"That's all right," he said. "I'm glad, Merreweather. No one can worry you at the inquest—which is excellent for you—and for the Spa!"

AN hour and a half later James Charles Merreweather, brine-baths attendant and masseur, walked up the hill towards his home. His face was grave. His step was slow—as though strength had gone out of him; but his heart held no remorse. As he reached his front door his eyes grew very bright and his shoulders went back squarely—as in one who is proud to see his home.

He entered. His wife was at dinner, with Margaret, his daughter, placed beside her in the customary child's high chair. He kissed them both—kissed them with extraordinary tenderness; and his heart filled with thankfulness and love.

"You're late, daddy," said Mrs. Merreweather as he took his seat at table.

"Yes. There was an accident this morning. A patient died during a hot immersion. He was abnormally fat, and obviously had heart disease. The doctor says no one is to blame."

"Poor man!" Mrs. Merreweather's voice showed her sympathy. "Was he—he wasn't one of your patients, daddy?"

"Yes, he was."

"It doesn't seem to have upset you!"

"I don't think it has, darling. It seemed so extraordinarily inevitable. In all the circumstances—so it seems to me—nothing else could have possibly occurred!"

His wife nodded back at him comprehendingly; looking, though, surprised just a trifle that her husband seemed so little put about. When she spoke, her whole manner displayed pleasure that he had not in any way been blamed.

"I'm truly glad you're exonerated, darling," she said, putting her hand in his with a quick, warm sympathy. "I'm rejoiced, too, it didn't happen yesterday. You remember you spoke of a dark shadow——"

"Oh, yes, yes." Merreweather rose—his heart bursting, almost, with thankfulness—and stopped her mouth with kisses, and then showered kisses on his baby. "But that was a fleeting trouble only. Now it has altogether passed!"

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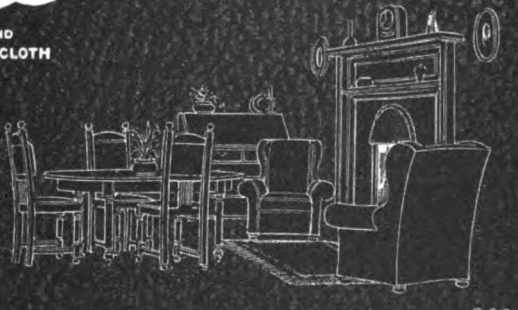

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To face end of Text.

:: "Home and Beauty." ::

THE only kind of beauty which is really worth having is the "home-cultivated" kind. Apart from artistic considerations it is far too risky for any woman to depend entirely on her coiffeur, her complexion specialist, and her corsetière, for her looks. At any moment circumstances may deprive her of their services—and of her dearly-bought looks! The simple treatments suggested below will, it is hoped, supply a long-felt want. All the recipes can be easily made up at home, but it is essential to get the exact original ingredients prescribed in each.

A DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

Too many women are the slaves of their hairdresser. This tyrant with his red-hot tongs (real instruments of torture for the hair) threatens most of us into submission by reminding us how plain we are with straight locks. Are you one of the independent souls who coax your hair into its attractive waves with silmerine, instead of bullying it with curling tongs? Silmerine is a clear harmless liquid; it doesn't make the hair at all greasy, and, if used with discretion, the results are really wonderful.

THE "MILK AND ROSES" COMPLEXION.

We read a great deal about the "milk and roses" complexion, but tangible examples of it are, unfortunately, rare. Yet pink-and-white cheeks, thought charming enough, are not necessarily more beautiful than cream, olive, or even brown skins. As long as the skin is clear, smooth, fine-grained, and free from blemishes, the actual colour matters little. That is why it is useless to try to tone up a poor complexion by applying cosmetics. The outer skin which has grown coarse and dirty with constant exposure should be entirely removed.

Smear some pure mercolized wax over the face at bed-time, wash it off in the morning with warm water, rinsing finally with cold. After a day or two of this treatment the oxygen in the wax will have absorbed the discoloured outer skin, leaving the clean new skin beneath free to breathe. This is the only scientific way to obtain a really good natural complexion. Nothing is better for the neck and arms, of course, than to treat them in the same way.

A VERY UGLY THING,

and one that will ruin any complexion, is the obnoxious presence of blackheads. The simplest and best way to remove them is to bathe them in a little warm water in which a tablet of stymol has been dissolved. They will then come out, without forcing, on the towel.

The texture of the skin depends on the size of the pores. When the pores are over enlarged, the skin becomes coarse and "shiny" and blackheads form on the face.

To keep the skin fine-grained an occasional astringent is needed. A sparkling face-bath with stymol is really excellent for keeping the pores normal.

A VERY PRETTY THING.

Few things add more to the charm of a face than well-marked eyebrows and long eyelashes. Of course, one must be very careful to choose a pomade that is absolutely harmless, and it is never wise to dye the eyelashes. If you rub a little mennaline into the roots of your lashes every other night, you will find that they will gradually grow longer, thicker, and darker, and will develop a delightful tendency to curl at the tips. The eyebrows will also grow thicker and darker with the same treatment.

THE "LINE OF BEAUTY."

Nowadays more than ever, a woman must be slim to look well. The modern straight frocks lose their beautiful "line" at once if the figure below is too bulky. Nevertheless, when trying to reduce superfluous fat, do not be too violent, or you may do yourself more harm than good. Have you tried eating a few clynol berries after each meal? They have wonderful digestive and absorbent properties, and are quite pleasant to taste. You can obtain them from any chemist.

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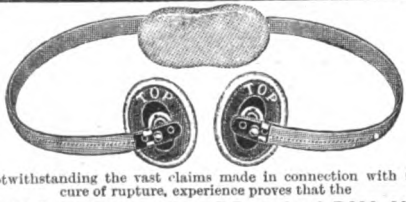

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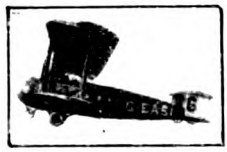

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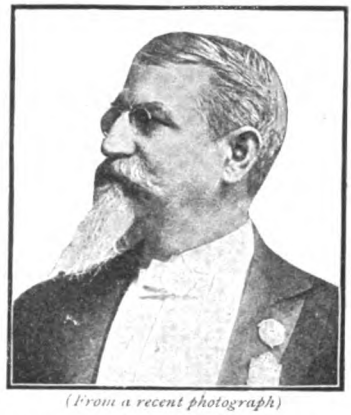

(From a recent photograph)

Seeking a Hair Growth

It is scarcely necessary for me to state that in the hope of growing new hair I had experimented with one thing and another—the usual array of lotions, pomades, shampoos, etc.—without getting any benefit. At that age I looked older than I do now. Later, when I became a trader in the Indian Territory of U.S.A., some of the Cherokees jocosely called me "the white brother without a scalp-lock."

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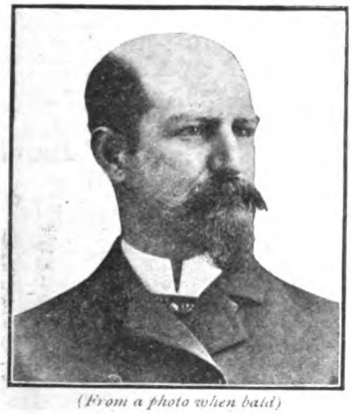

(From a photo when bald)

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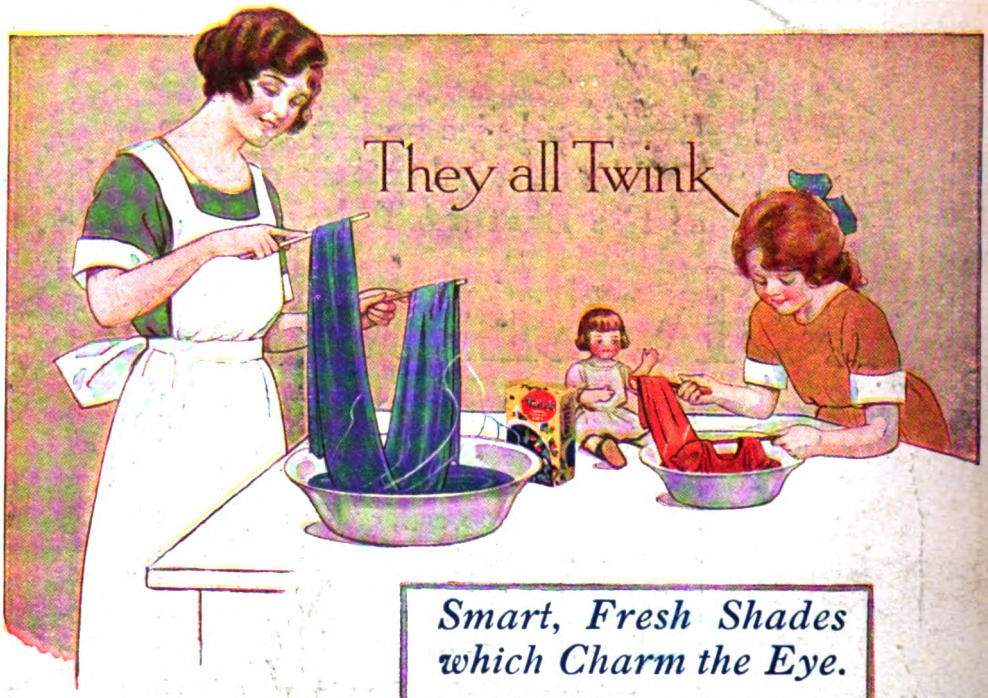

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Shell Pink	*Grass Green*	*Pale Blue*
Old Rose	*Reseda*	*Salmon Pink*
Rust Red	*Lilac*	*Jade Green*
Geranium Red	*Wine*	*Tangerine*
Nigger Brown	*Purple*	*Pillar Box Red*

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Twink

MADE BY THE MAKERS OF LUX

HAVE YOU HEARD THE TWINK DANCE MUSIC?

Comprising the latest Fox Trot and Waltz, together with an excellent Parade March.

Price **6d.** per copy. Post free $7\frac{1}{2}$**d.**

Orchestral parts loaned on request.

From LEVER BROS. LTD., 29/30 Bedford St., Strand, W.C.2

UTUMN FICTION NUMBER

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Gamyson

PAGE 22

SOMETHING SPECIAL!

An Enchanting Short Novel

BY

Mrs C.N. WILLIAMSON

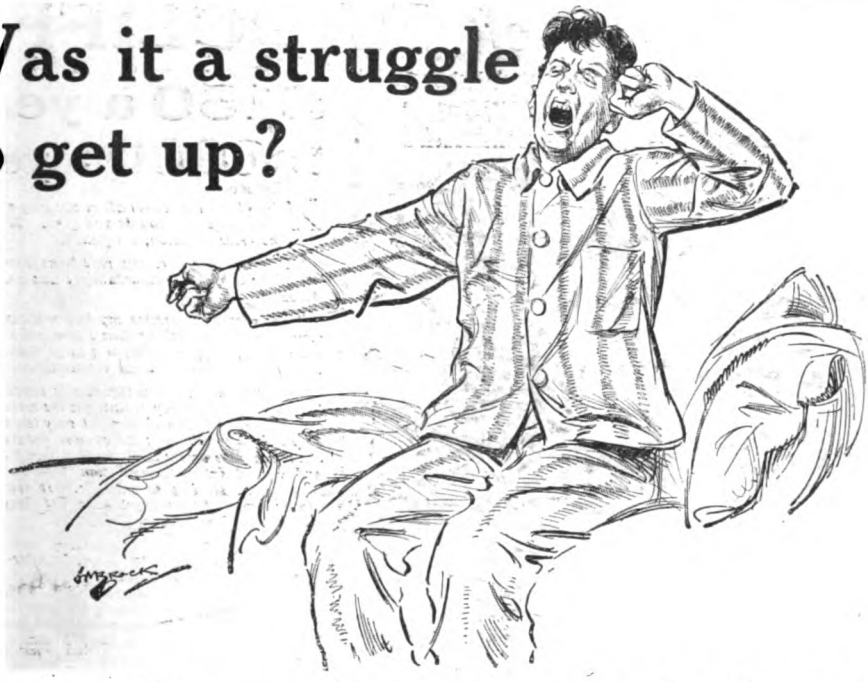
NOV.

1/-

Send for our free booklet "Finer Flavoured Milk Dishes." It is full of recipes for delicious cream and butter saving dishes that will please the whole family.

Libby, McNeill & Libby, Ltd. (DEPT. 1), LONDON, E.C.3.

Was it a struggle to get up?



How do you feel this morning? Did you drag out of bed feeling heavy and stale, unrefreshed by your night's sleep?

If you did, and many people do, it is a signal you should not ignore. It is Nature's signal that all is not quite as it should be with you. Nothing very serious, you know, but still not quite a satisfactory way to feel in the early morning.

What you need to banish these signs of fatigue and languor is Kruschen Salts—just a pinch in your breakfast cup of tea every morning.

Kruschen Salts will put you right in Nature's way.

The cause of this drowsiness in the mornings is not far to seek. Probably you are sitting a good deal during the day and getting insufficient exercise—an occasional walk or game of golf is not enough to keep you really fit.

Sensitive to this lack of regular physical exercise, the liver and kidneys become slack; they do not work as efficiently as they should.

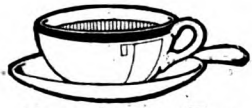
What they need is toning up, so that they do their work thoroughly.

Kruschen Salts restore proper activity to the liver and kidneys, so that they eliminate all the impurities from your system. The blood is cleansed and refreshed, and, circulating all over your body, revives every fibre of the system. Sleep refreshes you. You wake in the morning revived and brisk, ready for the day's work.

In a 1s. 9d. bottle of Kruschen Salts there is enough to last you three months—less than a farthing a day—for eager, strenuous health.

Kruschen Salts

Good Health for a Farthing a Day

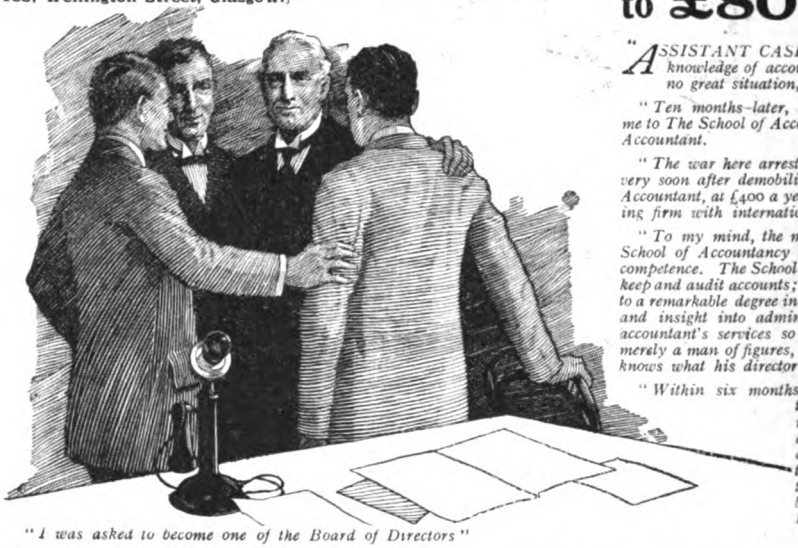


Tasteless in Tea

The dose of a sixpenceful taken every morning is found in practice just the right amount for a most invigorating daily tonic. The medicinal dose for persons suffering from pains of rheumatism and gout, or habitual constipation, with inactive liver, etc., is half to one teaspoonful in a tumbler of hot water before breakfast.

Autobiography of RADCLIFFE

[This is the second of a series of personal histories which past and present students will contribute to the advertising announcements of The School of Accountancy. Apart from the names, which for obvious reasons are fictitious, the whole of these autobiographies are true, and have been seen and certified correct by David Paterson, Chartered Accountant, 135, Wellington Street, Glasgow.]



"I was asked to become one of the Board of Directors"

£150 a year to £800 a year

"ASSISTANT CASHIER at 27, with a limited knowledge of accounts and £150. Mine was no great situation, I reflected.

"Ten months later, my reflections having led me to The School of Accountancy, I was a Certified Accountant.

"The war here arrested my business career, but very soon after demobilisation I obtained a post of Accountant, at £400 a year, to a large manufacturing firm with international connections.

"To my mind, the most valuable result of The School of Accountancy training is the certainty of competence. The School does not only teach how to keep and audit accounts; it does more, for it succeeds to a remarkable degree in giving that width of view and insight into administration that render an accountant's services so valuable. It creates not merely a man of figures, but a man of figures who knows what his director needs.

"Within six months my salary was raised to £500. After twenty months' service, I was earning £800, and, at the close of last year, or about two years after I had entered the firm, I was asked to become one of the Board of Directors."

School of Accountancy training is not for any and every man

NO one could realise more thoroughly than The School of Accountancy that the ability to rise to a responsible position and command a high salary is not possessed by any and every man. Therefore, unless The School is convinced of a prospective student's ability to benefit by training, his enrolment is not accepted. Whenever preliminary correspondence leads to the belief that a man is not likely to succeed under The School's system of tuition, the man is frankly told so.

Whom do we enrol as students? It is not necessary that a man should have a first-class education before he can enrol as a postal student of The School of Accountancy, but it is necessary that he should have an average amount of intelligence and that he should be serious in his ambitions and prepared to work.

What Postal Training means School of Accountancy Postal Training means seriously applying yourself to study after the day's work is done, for three hours on at least two evenings a week over a minimum period of six months. By this means alone will it be possible for you to achieve success similar to that which has already been won by the thousands of students who have preceded you.

The School's Guarantee If your ambitions are serious and you know you are sufficiently stern of purpose to devote yourself keenly to the training offered, you have this definite guarantee that your time will not be wasted.

If you will make an effort to qualify yourself to fill a responsible position in business, The School of Accountancy will stand by you until you succeed.

Six to Twelve Months Six to twelve months is the time usually taken by The School's students to complete their courses, but there is no fixed time limit, and no extra fees are charged, even if the tuition be spread over a period of years.

Rarely do School of Accountancy students who train to sit for professional examinations fail to pass at the first sitting, but in such cases the training is continued without further charge until success is achieved.

Train to become an Accountant, Company Secretary, Office or Works Manager These are the men who are needed to-day in business, and you can definitely qualify for such positions by training in your spare time, in your own home, under the guidance of The School of Accountancy. The training The School gives is successful because it is thorough, and because the tutors who train you know exactly what knowledge is needed by a man in order to secure the position he sets out to attain.

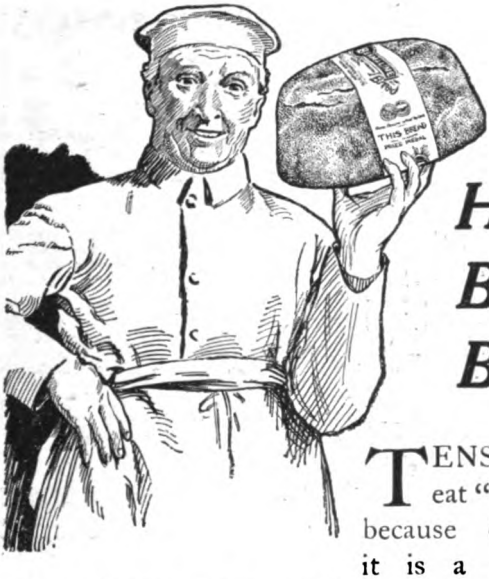
This Valuable Business Guide——Free

It contains useful information about business and business training, gives particulars of all Courses and Terms, and includes facts which will definitely convince you that The School's postal training will qualify you to fill a responsible executive position. Write for a copy to-day to:

THE SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY

2, West Regent Street, GLASGOW
10, Essex St., Strand, LONDON, W.C.2
Millgate Buildings, Long Millgate, MANCHESTER
Hale Chambers, 22, Sir Thomas Street, LIVERPOOL
Standard Buildings, City Square, LEEDS
8, Newhall Street - - BIRMINGHAM

By securing TEN First Places in the Professional Examinations and FIVE Royal Society of Arts Medals, School of Accountancy Students set up a new training record for the United Kingdom in 1921



Here is the Best Brown Bread

TENS OF THOUSANDS eat "Bermaline" primarily because of its flavour, for it is a delightful bread to eat. Others, again, prefer it because of the ease with which it is digested and converted into energy and vitality. But the most important feature of all is the benefit everyone—young and old, delicate and healthy—will derive from eating this highly-nourishing bread.

The choicest wheat and malted barley—nature's greatest life-sustaining gifts—prepared by the "Bermaline" process, give to "Bermaline" a food value much greater than that of ordinary bread. The "Bermaline" process not only increases the nutritive value of the bread, but makes it easier to digest.

Indeed, than "Bermaline" there is no finer bread baked. It is a complete, highly-nourishing food, with the added virtue of being perfectly delicious.

Just try it for a change

"Bermaline" Bread

The Proprietors of "Bermaline" — MONTGOMERIE & CO., LTD., IBROX, GLASGOW, supply the special ingredients for making "Bermaline" Bread to Bakers who are agents throughout the United Kingdom. Ask for the maker's name and address in your district.

℗M.2.

Eat more good toffee

Billy Boy says:

"Fancy putting 'Eat more good toffee'—as though any fellow needs that advice!

"They ought to say, 'Uncle, your nephew needs Mackintosh's'—or, 'Dad, take a tin home to Billy to-night.'

"Still, if Dad or Uncle sees this—well, I've been a pretty good boy lately—and a little encouragement . . . . !"

* * * * * *

Let your youngsters have more good toffee. Let them have the very best of all toffees,

Mackintosh's Toffee de Luxe

Egg & Cream-de-Luxe **Café-de-Luxe**
Almond Toffee-de-Luxe **Mint-de-Luxe**
Cocoanut-de-Luxe **De-Luxe Assortment**
Plain Toffee-de-Luxe

Sold loose by weight at 8d. per ½lb., and in Baby Oval Tins and Tall Tins at 1/3 each, Junior Oval Tins and Tall Tins at 2/6 each; and in 4-lb. Tins.

You can also buy Plain Toffee-de-Luxe in Popular Week-end Tins, 2/- each; and 5/- Family Tins.

P I. 2.

Furniture of Economy, Comfort and Wear

CASH OR EASY PAYMENTS — Free and Safe Delivery

by Motor Traction, or Rail to nearest Railway Station.

A SUITE WHICH WILL GIVE SATISFACTION IN WEAR.

If not approved of, can be returned at our expense, and any money paid will be refunded in full.

3-Piece "PEMBROKE" Solid Oak Bedroom Suite.

Comprising WARDROBE, DRESSING CHEST and WASHSTAND.

WARDROBE 4 ft. 6 ins. extreme width, 4 ft. on Carcass, height 6 ft. 10 ins. Mirror 50 ins. by 15 ins. Made in three parts, full width drawer, ample hanging accommodation, with brass revolving and side hooks. DRESSING CHEST 3 ft. wide, full width deep drawers, Jewel Drawer, Swing Mirror 28 ins. by 18 ins., mounted on Castors. WASHSTAND 3 ft. wide, Figured Marble Slab and Back, convenient Cupboard, 2 Towel Rails affixed, mounted on Castors. The whole of the pieces are of SOLID OAK, Fumed or finished Jacobean shade, and will stand a LIFETIME'S WEAR. Copper or Brass Handles of Antique finish. Mirrors are Bevelled and Silvered British Plate Glass.

If Washstand not required deduct £5 5s.

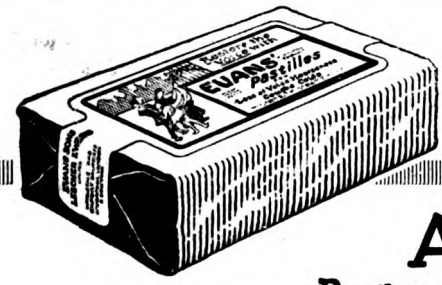
Oak Cane Chairs to match, **12s. 6d.** each.

Three Pieces, £36 Cash, or £3 with Order and 33 Payments of £1 2s. 6d. Monthly

FREE Our Fully Illustrated Catalogue, together with Terms, etc. A perusal of this will save you Pounds in Furnishing.

GLOBE Furnishing Co. (Dept. E). **Pembroke Place, LIVERPOOL.**

J. R. GRANT, Proprietor.



Avoid Colds

Don't wait until you have to cure them

You need protection against infection as you mingle with the crowds; you need Evans' Pastilles to keep the mouth and throat in healthy condition. Evans' Pastilles destroy the germs of disease which we are constantly inhaling, allay and prevent throat soreness, and strengthen the vocal cords.

1/3 per Tin.

Sold by all Chemists. Sole Proprietors: Evans Sons Lescher & Webb Ltd., Liverpool and London.

See the Raised Bar on every Pastille—exclusive to Evans'.

EVANS' Pastilles

An effective precautionary measure against bronchial ailments and the microbes of Influenza, Catarrh, etc.

℗ E.P.S.

CLARNICO

CLARNICO
LILY BRAZILS

A delightful new confection that is as pure and good as it is delicious.

Choice, tempting, clean-cut Brazil-nut kernels, embedded in a deliciously flavoured sweetmeat made of cane-sugar, butter and full-cream milk. A delicacy of exquisite flavour, texture and smoothness

Each piece is wrapped separately; each a tempting, tasty morsel, of real delight.

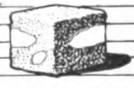
Clarnico Lily Brazils are sold at

8d. per $\frac{1}{4}$ lb.

by confectioners everywhere.

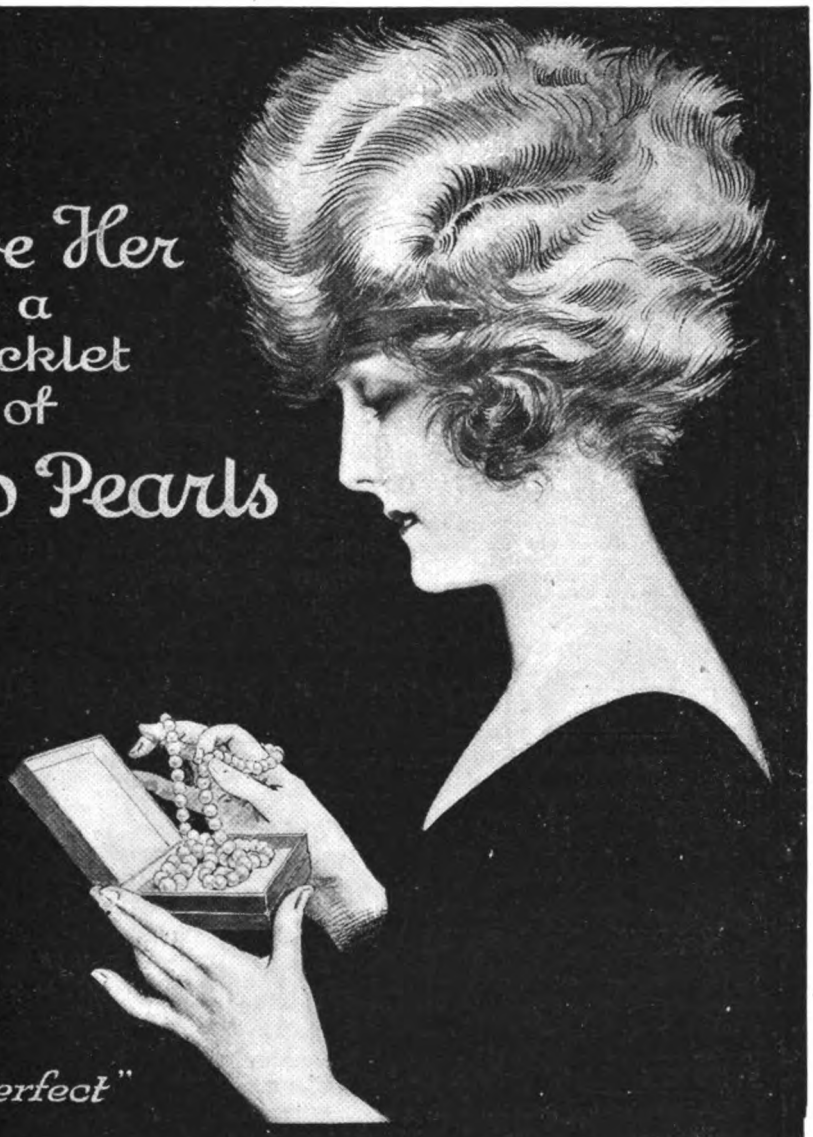
CLARKE, NICKOLLS & COOMBS, Ltd.
Victoria Park, London.
Founded in 1872.

CLARNICO
LILY
BRAZILS
THE NEW
CONFECTION



CLARNICO LILY BRAZILS

Give Her a necklet of Ciro Pearls



"How Perfect"

What is the gift a woman values more than any other—that always charms and fascinates—is ever appropriate? CIRO PEARLS—the one true reproduction of real pearls; with exactly the same lustre, sheen, colouring, texture, shape and weight, so that when worn side by side the cleverest judges cannot tell which is which. There is indeed but one difference between CIRO PEARLS and the genuine products of the deep sea—their price. If you come to our showrooms, your own eyes will convince you of this, but if you cannot, then avail yourself of

OUR UNIQUE OFFER.

On receipt of One Guinea, we will send you a necklet of Ciro Pearls, 16 inches long, with clasp and case complete, or a ring, brooch, earrings, or any other Ciro Pearl jewel in hand-made gold settings. If, after comparing them with real or other artificial pearls, they are not found equal to the former or superior to the latter, return them to us within fifteen days and we will refund your money. Ciro Pearl necklets may also be obtained in any length required. We have a large staff of expert pearl stringers.

Latest descriptive Booklet No. 12 sent post free on application.

Ciro Pearls Ltd.

39 Old Bond Street London W.1 Dept 12.

Our Showrooms are on the First Floor, over Lloyds Bank, near Piccadilly.

"The Berkeley Chair is cosy, commodious and comfortable. It is the chair for the tired man seeking rest."—The Rev. Father BERNARD VAUGHAN

"The Berkeley Chair increases the daily competition of my mind between the necessity of work and the love of ease."—T. P. O'CONNOR, M.P.

"I find it a chair conducive to thought; and if I must confess it—to sleep."—JEFFERY FARNOL

"I am very pleased with the Berkeley. It is most restful, and I can well recommend it."—LILLAH McCARTHY

"I find the Berkeley Arm Chair most comfortable and restful."—GLADYS COOPER

"The Chair is most comfortable and rather inclined to seduce one from one's daily occupations."—GEORGE ROBEY

Famous People Praise the Chair which Tens of Thousands Use

THE luxurious comfort and unrivalled value of the Berkeley Easy Chair has given wonderful satisfaction to thousands of purchasers in every walk of life. The actual words of delighted users are the strongest possible recommendation for this famous chair, and here we give a few extracts from letters received from notable men and women. And remember that their glowing words are about a chair which is not only luxurious, but its price places it within the reach of everybody.

The Berkeley is designed to afford perfect rest to body and brain. It is fitted with long steel-coppered springs in the seat, back and front edge. It has bold, broad, heavily upholstered arms with an extra deep seat and double bordered front. Its value is unrivalled. Get a Berkeley NOW. For a small outlay you will then have a sound, handsome Easy Chair which will give you perfect service for years and years — long after the price is forgotten.

The Berkeley *Easy Chair*

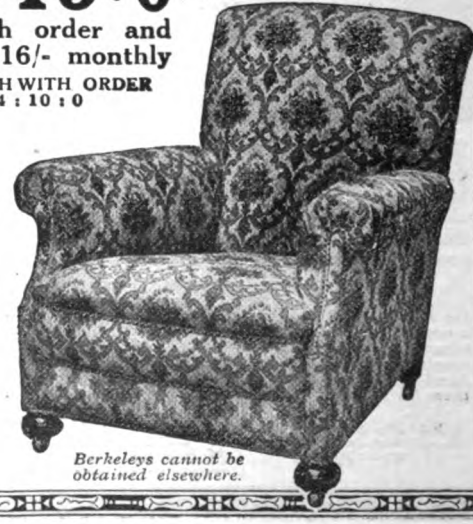
HAS THE LARGEST SALE OF ANY EASY CHAIR IN THE WORLD

£4:15:0

FREE DELIVERY in England & Wales (Scotland 5/- extra)

15/- with order and balance 16/- monthly

FULL CASH WITH ORDER £4 : 10 : 0



Berkeleys cannot be obtained elsewhere.

You take no risk in ordering a Berkeley for every Chair is

SOLD ON THE MONEY-BACK PRINCIPLE

Soon after receipt of first payment with your order we send the Berkeley *Carriage Paid* in England and Wales (Scotland 5/- extra). If upon examination it is not completely satisfactory you may return it within 7 days AT OUR EXPENSE and we will REFUND YOUR MONEY in FULL

FREE *Write for samples of Tapestries to choose your own covering, Post Free with full specification.*

H. J. SEARLE & SON LTD.

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133, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.1.
And at 61-63, London Rd., Croydon.

The Direct Route to SUCCESS is *via* a METROPOLITAN College Training.

The Swift and "Get-You-There" Way to SUCCESS in Business.

Are YOU progressing swiftly and surely towards the realisation of your great hope to become a successful business man? If not, why have men of your acquaintance—men whose natural ability is not a whit superior to your own—reached Success before you?

In every case it is specialisation and expert training in one of the branches of modern business, such as Accountancy, Secretaryship, Costing, Advertising, Insurance, Banking, etc.

Are *you* specialising? Are *you* qualifying for a better position, ready to acquit yourself triumphantly when the opportunity comes? The modern employer cannot wait for a man to prepare himself; he takes the one who is trained and *waiting for him*. It is easy to temporise—"Oh, well, I shall have more time in January"—but procrastination is fatal to Success, and that is the way life's failures are made. *There is no time like the present!*

With Summer-Time over, and the clock put back, the long dark evenings make fireside study—in the cosy depths of one's favourite armchair—a very congenial pursuit, as pleasurable as profitable when an expertly prepared Metropolitan College course is in question.

Write at once for your copy of the

132-page "GUIDE TO CAREERS,"

which handsome and informative volume will be sent to all applicants on request—

POST PAID, and FREE *TO KEEP*

—without any kind of obligation attached.

Individual Postal Training—Taken at Home, in Spare Time.

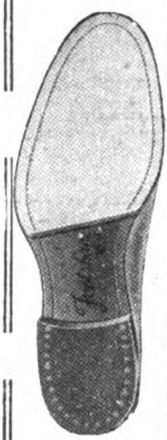
That a Metropolitan College postal training is outstandingly efficient is demonstrated conclusively by this famous Institution's continuous stream of REMARKABLE SUCCESSES IN THE PRINCIPAL PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATIONS, wherein the College's Students have frequently achieved more passes than all other entrants aggregated.

METROPOLITAN COLLEGE

Dept. S., ST. ALBANS.

Double Wear Boots

BARRATTS DOUBLE SOLE IDEA GIVES 100% ADDED LIFE WITH ALL THE STYLE AND SMARTNESS OF LIGHT FOOTWEAR.



The man who values his health and his pocket need no longer wear heavy, bulky footwear. Barratts Double Sole Boots are a smart cut, and just the style to suit the city man. Yet the wear is wonderful. It cuts your boot bills in half, and the boots are the best possible insurance against damp, cold feet and all the ill-health which they cause.

What this Double Clump Sole Does

The extra sole of first-grade English butt sole leather is stitched to the first sole. It is easily detached when worn and may be replaced by a new extra sole. Every boot repairer will quickly realise the immense advantages of this simple method, for it is almost impossible to remove a worn ordinary sole without tearing the welts, cracking the insole, and straining and damaging the uppers. Then the wet gets through the repaired boot and causes rapid decay of the leather. But the wet can never penetrate Barratts Double Sole Boots; the insoles are always kept dry, and the feet also.

Style 1655 "Derby" Pattern.

Direct by Post **27/6** POST FREE

Postage Overseas Extra.

Same Boot in "Balmoral" Style, 1614, same price.

Fair Wear or FREE Repair.

All Barratts Boots and Shoes are sold on the strict understanding that if you return the goods unsoiled your cash will be immediately returned. All "Footshapes" not giving reasonable wear are repaired free of charge.

Order by Post at Barratts Factory Price.

You couldn't get this quality in the shops for 27/6 *without* the extra sole. Best Selected Black Box Calf Uppers, good substance and cosily soft to wear. All stiffeners and the insole are solid leather. Stylish "Derby" pattern with medium toe. A typical example of the better quality made possible by dealing direct with the manufacturer at the makers' price.

How to Order. State Style 1655 and give usual size worn. Or send your Footshape, a pencil outline of your foot (in sock) resting with normal pressure on paper. Hold pencil upright. Stocked in 24 fittings:—Sizes 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, each in three widths, medium, wide and extra wide. (Size 12, 1/- extra.) Send 27/6 by cheque or money order for home orders. Overseas customers please add postage to home price where C.O.D. is not in operation. Where Cash on Delivery system operates a deposit of 10/- only with order is necessary. Address letter direct to Barratts Factory. Boots sent same day as order is received.

W. BARRATT & Co., LTD.,

20, "Footshape" Boot Works, Northampton.

Send 3d. postage for Barratts 115-page Illustrated Catalogue.

Smoke better Cigarettes

The aim of the anti-'gasper' movement, in which The Aristocrat of Cigarettes has taken the initial step, is to urge smokers to give their palate and good cigarettes the consideration they deserve.

A VOGUE has insinuated itself into society which outrages the principles of refinement—the vogue of the 'gasper.'

One finds men, whose tastes in all other directions would seem irreproachable, consuming the cheap, coarse, pungent 'gasper' with a self-conscious air of bravado.

'Gasper'-smoking can give no real pleasure. It deadens the palate: it irritates the throat: it is merely the cause of tongue-burning and headache.

As a vogue, 'gasper'-smoking may commend itself to people who are faithful to any vogue at all costs; but viewed rightly it is simply a pernicious habit that becomes more and more difficult to throw off.

The word 'gasper' is used in reference to no one particular brand of cigarettes, but to cheap cigarettes in general.

THE secret of pleasurable smoking lies in the fragrant aroma of pure, properly matured tobacco leaf and the subtleties of skilful blending, which are qualities exclusive to the good *cigarette.*

When you smoke good cigarettes your palate begins to regain its normal condition, and you begin to lose that nervous craving which is the cause of excessive smoking.

You smoke a good *cigarette for pleasure alone—it* satisfies *you, and therefore you smoke in moderation. That is why a* good *cigarette is more economical than a 'gasper.'*

"De Reszke"
The Aristocrat of CIGARETTES

From Earl Winterton:
"Lord Winterton considers the 'De Reszke' Cigarettes excellent."

TENOR — The TURKISH Cigarette with the PRE-WAR quality

AMERICAN — The VIRGINIA Cigarette with the TENOR reputation

In boxes of 10's, 25's, 50's and 100's. Obtainable at all leading Tobacconists and Stores, or from

J. MILLHOFF & CO. LTD., 86 PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1

STANWORTHS' "Defiance" REGD UMBRELLAS.

Just Wrap Your OLD UMBRELLA in paper, tie to a board or stick, and post to us to-day with P.O. for **7/6**. By next post it will come back "as good as new," re-covered with our "Defiance" Union and securely packed. Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra. A postcard will bring you our illustrated Catalogue of "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from **5/-** upwards.

J. STANWORTH & CO.,
Royal Umbrella Works,
BLACKBURN.

The Grey Hair Problem

Solved by a New Discovery

The discovery of NUCTONE has solved the Grey Hair Problem.

NUCTONE acts on an entirely different principle from any other preparation by giving to the cells of the hair those pigments which Nature has ceased to supply, leaving the colour to come *gradually, permanently,* and *safely* through the action of light and air.

NUCTONE is guaranteed not to contain sulphur, lead, or any other injurious ingredient.

NUCTONE for Dark Hair. NUCTONE Eclaire for Blonde and Auburn shades. Price **6/6** per bottle; postage (inland) 6d. extra.

Obtainable from all leading Chemists, Hairdressers and Stores, including Harrods, Barkers, Whiteleys, London; Lewis's, Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham.

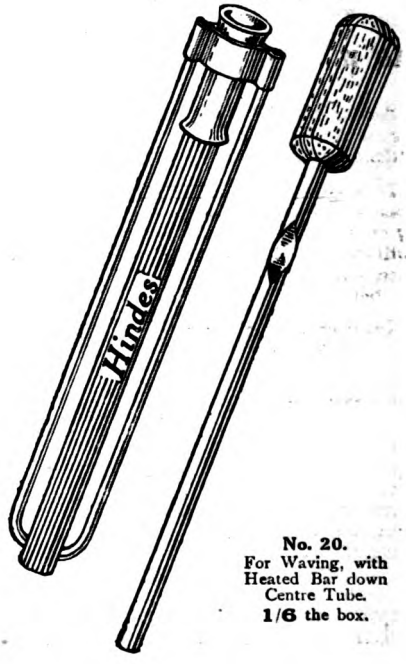
Descriptive Booklet post free from

J. STEWART, LTD., 80, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1

HINDE'S HAIR WAVERS

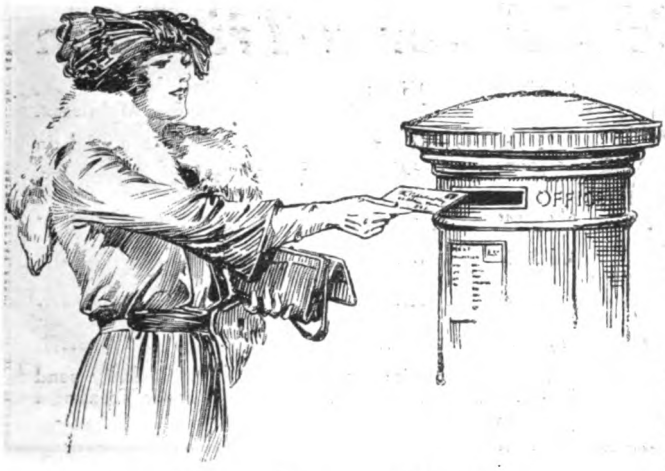
No. 18. Tortoisene Centre Bar.

"Nature alone won't wave the hair, Hinde's Wavers, too, must do their share."



No. 20.
For Waving, with Heated Bar down Centre Tube.
1/6 the box.

In different patterns, obtainable at all Stores, Drapery Houses, and Hairdressers. Crude imitations which are hurtful to the hair may be sometimes offered. It is necessary to see that the name "Hindes" is on each article. Hindes, Limited, Manufacturers of Hair Brushes and Articles for the Dressing Table, 1, Tabernacle St., London, E.C., and Metropolitan Works, Birmingham.



Ask the Way

to prettier teeth—you are welcome to it

A new-day method is bringing millions whiter, cleaner, sounder teeth.

It is used by your friends, your neighbours. It is advised by dentists, urged by modern authorities. Glistening teeth seen everywhere now show the benefits it brings.

This offers a ten-day test to reveal its results to you.

It combats the film

Film is that viscous coat you feel. It clings to teeth, gets between the teeth and stays there. The ordinary tooth paste does not effectively combat it. So much is left. It is also the basis of tartar.

Film absorbs stains, making the teeth look cloudy or discoloured. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acids. It holds the acids in contact with the teeth and the acids may cause decay.

Few escape the effects of film, despite the daily brushing.

New methods found

Dental science has now found two ways to fight that film. Able authorities have proved their efficiency. Now careful people employ them nearly all the world over, largely by dental advice.

A new-type tooth paste has been created, to comply with modern requirements. The name is Pepsodent. Those two film combatants are embodied in it for daily application.

Two other essentials

Two other effects are essential, as proved by modern research.

The saliva contains two great tooth-protecting agents. One is a starch digestant, one is alkali. One is to digest the starch deposits which cling to teeth and gum them. Often they ferment and form acids. The alkalis neutralize mouth acids as they form.

Pepsodent stimulates those factors. It multiplies the starch digestant, multiplies the alkalis. Thus every use gives those natural powers a manifold effect.

Watch the film go

Note how clean the teeth feel after using Pepsodent. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as the film-coats disappear. The after-effects are refreshing, and the mouth is left in an alkaline condition.

These are facts you should know at once. Write us today for the 10-Day Tube.

Cut out the coupon now.

Pepsodent MARK TRADE

The New-Day Dentifrice

Approved by modern authorities. Advised by leading dentists everywhere. Now employed by careful people the world over. All druggists supply the large tubes.

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890

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Mail 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent to—

Name.....

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Give full address. Write plainly.
Only one tube to a family.

STRAND MAG./NOV.

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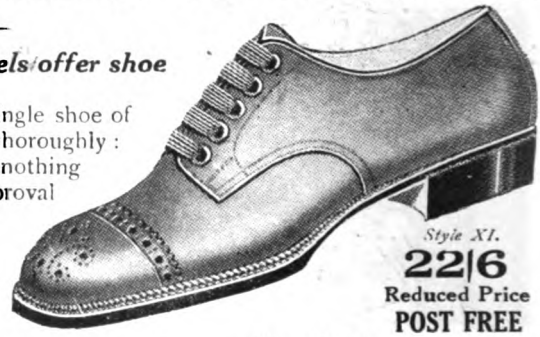

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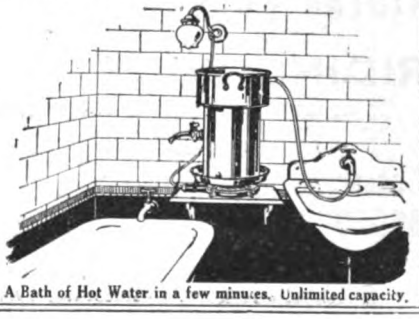

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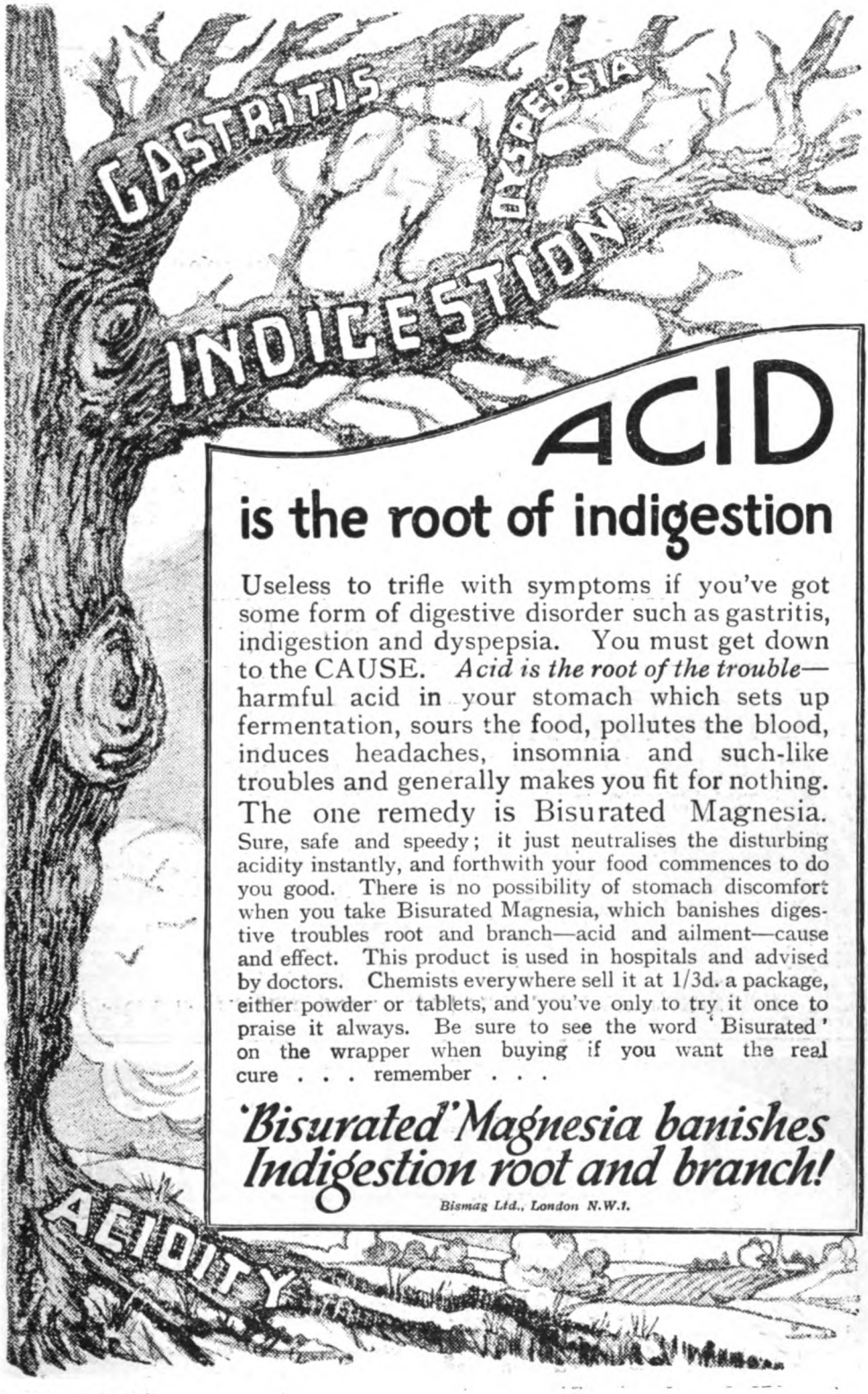
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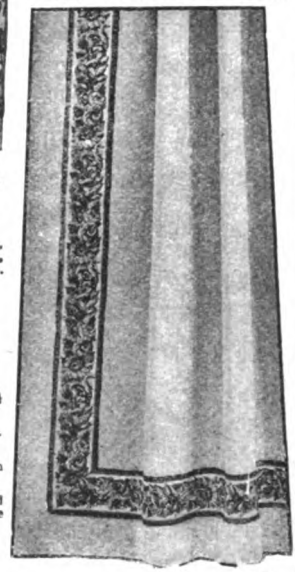
ART SERGE, in a good range of colours, from 1/11½ per yd., 50 ins. wide.

BOLTON SHEETING, 50 ins. wide, 2/4½ per yd.

CRETONNES, SHADOW TISSUES AND TAFFETAS, varying from 1/0½ to 18/11 per yd.

CASEMENT CLOTHS in various colourings and qualities from 10½d. per yd.

THE "BARRINGTON" CURTAIN.



Resist Tropical Sun, "Sunpruf" Sea Air and Washing.

UNFADABLE FABRICS

"SUN-VEIN" CASEMENT CLOTH. Creams from 1/4½ per yd. Colours from 1/11½ per yd., 31 ins. wide.

"SUN-BOURNE" TWILL. Creams from 3/11½ per yd. Colours from 5/2 per yd., 50 ins. wide.

"SUNPRUF" POPLINS, REPS, AND DAMASKS, from 6/9 per yd., 50 ins. wide.

All Fabrics prefixed with the word "Sun" are guaranteed unfadable. Any length failing to meet this guarantee will be replaced.

PATTERNS POST FREE.

Of heavy reversible Plushette, with rich cut velvet border, 3½ yds. long, 63/- per pair.

Of heavy quality Serge, in various colours, with an effective Tapestry Border, 3½ yds. long, 27/6 per pair.

Williamson & Cole LTD

HIGH STREET, CLAPHAM S.W.4

OBTAINABLE IN WHITE, FIFTEEN COLOURS AND BLACK.

The HASLAM Fabrics

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TRUSONAIN

FOR LINGERIE, CHILDREN'S GARMENTS & BLOUSES.

Look for the name on the Selvedge.

Close-woven durable and easily laundered.

Width 39/40 ins.

1/9 Per Yard

Write for Pattern Card to Haslams Ltd., Manchester.

Why trouble trouble ?

IT is too late to lock the stable door when the steed is stolen, and it is too late to think of the children's health when trouble has entered the home.

Get the children PESCO, now. They will like it and you will like it. It is as soft as their velvety skins, and it is as sure a safeguard as science and industry can devise. Nothing but the purest wool or silk and wool are used in its manufacture, and nothing but happiness and health can result from its constant use.

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PESCO is obtainable in London and Provincial Departmental Stores, and from high-class Drapers and Hosiers in every Underwear shape; also in Hosiery and Sports wear for Ladies, Gentlemen and Children. Every garment is guaranteed unshrinkable. In case of difficulty write the makers for name of nearest Agents.

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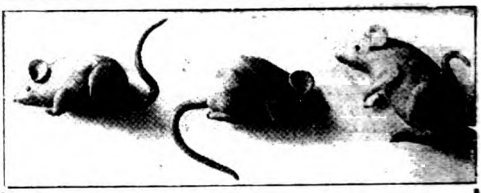

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But what fun you can get from a Modelling Outfit — white mice—pink mice—blue—green—yellow—any coloured mice that takes :: your fancy. ::

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This splendid installation, combining boiler and hot-water storage tank, needs very little attention. One stoking is sufficient for many hours, and it eats up far less fuel than the old-fashioned kitchen range—a method now antiquated for water-heating systems. If a range boiler is already fixed and requires replacing, our

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without cylinder can be used with equal success and connected to existing pipes.

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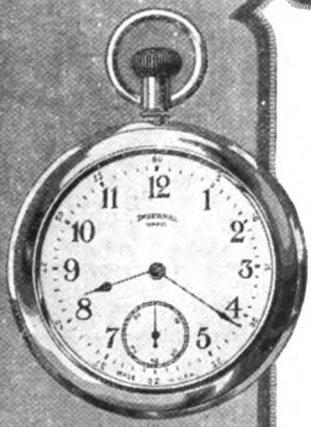

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INGERSOLL YANKEE RADIOLITE **15/-**

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All that is seen of it.

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A perfect aid at a low price. It will enable a deaf person to hear in church or theatre, and enjoy the delights of conversation. Unique trial terms. Write for full particulars NOW. Sent free by return of post.

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GET A **WEST HAT GRIP**

TO KEEP YOUR HAT SMART.

in perfect shape, and get rid of those ugly dents. (Patent No. 152574.) The West Hat Grip is **small, neat, transparent,** and fits inside right into the fold of your hat just where you raise it. **It cannot fall out,** being fastened with small stitch, or special pin given with the Grip. The white line on the illustrated hat shows the position of the West Hat Grip inside. B.F.R. writes: "Please send me another of your Hat Grips. I got one about a year ago, and the hat in which it was sewn **looks just as good a shape as when new.**" F.A.H. writes: "Kindly forward another of your West Hat Grips. A brilliant success; fills a long-standing need."

Instructions given with each one.

Price **1/6** only.

Of Hatters, Hosiers, Outfitters, etc., or post free from the Inventor,

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Women who use Pond's

The Business Girl

Occupations that necessitate much time being spent indoors are not good for the complexion. It is therefore no wonder that the modern business girl is a staunch advocate of the use of the two purest and popular creams—Pond's Vanishing Cream and Pond's Cold Cream.

Pond's Vanishing Cream—for day use—being non-greasy, requires no massage, but disappears instantly into the skin, leaving no trace of use. It is a protective cream against the elements, making the complexion delicate, appealingly soft and smooth at all times.

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Pond's Creams never promote the growth of hair.

"TO SOOTHE AND SMOOTH YOUR SKIN."

Both Creams of all chemists and stores in handsome opal jars **1/3** *and* **2/6**, *also collapsible tubes* **7½***d. (handbag size) and* **1/-**

Pond's Cold Cream and Vanishing Cream

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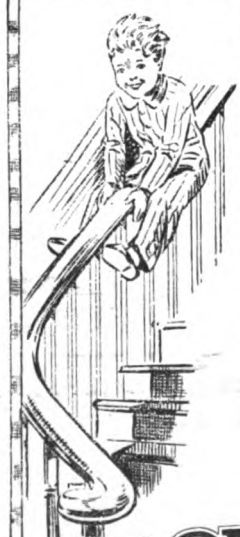

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Brimful of good spirits, the healthy youngster is always in mischief—but in case of accidents keep Cooper's handy. For bruises and sprains it is invaluable.

A user writes:

"Since my accident I have suffered from very severe periodical attacks of sciatica and rheumatism . . . Your embrocation is everything that is claimed for it and more . . . the first application gives relief."

For Household Use, 2/-

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John Peel Brand
EMBROCATION

YOUR CHEMIST SELLS IT.

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"Rodiod has made a Remarkable Improvement"

From hundreds of unsolicited testimonials we quote the following:—Miss R. writes: "Have used Rodiod for a week and find even within that short time *a remarkable improvement*." Mrs. F. L. writes: "Have obtained *excellent results* from first pot"; and Miss E. K. states: "*I am delighted* with the treatment." Rodiod *is* a remarkable fat reducer. Applied locally to

THICK, UNGAINLY ANKLES AND DOUBLE CHINS

it quickly reduces them to normal contour and fashionable grace. Absolutely harmless. Call or write for a jar at once. **9/-** and **5/-** post free in plain wrapper. Money returned in full if not satisfied. Stocked by **Selfridge and Lewis & Burrows, Harrods, etc.**

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Airsickness—
Seasickness or
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prevented & cured
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Mothersill's
SEASICK REMEDY

or money refunded
OF ALL CHEMISTS

Write NOW for Post Free Patterns

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REPS AND POPLINS, silky finish, cream and lovely art shades, 50ins. wide. **5/11** to **8/11** yard.

FANCY DAMASKS, handsome self trellis and floral effects, 50ins. wide, from **5/11** yd.

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CASEMENT CLOTH, 28ins. wide. Creams, **1/0½** yard. Colours, **1/3½ yard.** 31ins. wide, from **1/4½** yard. 50ins. wide, from **1/11½** yard.

DUROBELLE CHENILLE WASHING RUGS, beautiful effects, 4ft. x 2ft., **18 6.**

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THE ORIGINAL PERMANENT DYE

Replaced Free if colours fade

Make your Winter Curtains of "Durobelle"—you will be delighted with their appearance and wear. There is a wide choice of beautiful textures and colours particularly suitable for long winter curtains, casements, portières, etc. Every "Durobelle" fabric is guaranteed absolutely fadeless. Neither sun nor washing affect them in the least. Even after years of wear your "Durobelle" curtains and coverings will still be a source of pride.

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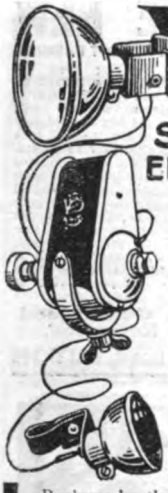
London: 188, Sloane Street, S.W.
All Letters to Bournemouth, please.



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SELF GENERATING ELECTRIC CYCLE LAMP
All British Made.

EXTRACT FROM THE "C.T.C. GAZETTE," AUGUST, 1922.

"The Voltalite is a method of illumination that has been in use for nearly 20 years.

"It gives the least trouble of any electric system, and as an always ready, cleanly, and trustworthy method of showing a light on a cycle it scores conspicuously."

AS USED BY H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES AND MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY.

Produces by the movement of the Cycle, at no cost, from Walking to Racing Speed, an inexhaustible supply of Electricity to brilliantly illuminate Head Lamp and Rear Lamp.

No. V2 HEAD SET.

Complete with Generator, Cord, Bulb, and Head Lamp. Ready for immediate use.

27/6

Extra with Illuminated Rear Lamp, 2/6

Postage extra, 1/-.

MOTOR-CYCLE TYPE
"Just as good as the Cycle Voltalite."
Particulars and Prices on request.

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Described by the Editor of the *Weekly Telegraph* as "The most ingenious adjunct to the cycle that has yet been devised."

Rev. J. H., Canterbury.
"I have been a satisfied user of the Cycle Voltalite since 1912 and the original outfit is still going strong."

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"Have had unqualified satisfaction from Cycle Voltalite obtained from you about five years ago."

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"I might state the Voltalite is the best of its type on the market. I have had an opportunity of examining other sets, but, in my opinion, they are not to be compared with the one manufactured by you, being the best of its class irrespective of price."

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"I am writing to you out of sheer good faith to say how well your Voltalite has served me. I have had same for some two years and have had the most satisfactory results it is possible to get out of any such lighting."

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"The set has run perfectly from the day I fitted it, and is wonderfully satisfactory in every respect."

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"I have had your Voltalite now for nearly 3½ years, used every day of that time. It is still in perfect order and has proved most satisfactory."

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"I have had this set 12 years or more and been a perfect success."

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"The lamp has given every satisfaction over a period of 7 years and has needed no attention."

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To avoid dissatisfaction firmly refuse proffered substitutes.

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Pure Wool

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In Fancy Checks, 54" x 68" - - **35/6**

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Ask for the Jaeger Catalogue.

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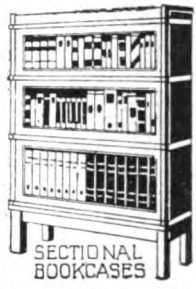
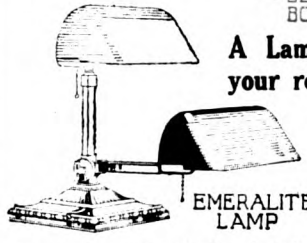
A Bookcase to take ALL your Books.

Infinitely preferable to the fixed style as the sections can be fitted in any available space, and moved or rearranged wherever desired. More sections can be added at any time. Handsome in appearance. Ideal for either office or home.





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OLD HATS MADE NEW

AND REMODELLED TO PRESENT FASHION

Save money by sending your old **VELOUR, FELT, BEAVER** or **STRAW** hat to the Renovating Expert—**A. WRIGHT,** of **Luton.** His clever workers will quickly transform your old hat—completely renovate, re-model, and return it equal to a new West End Creation. Send for Free Catalogue of **60 styles** of latest fashionable shapes. Ladies can then choose the design to which they wish their old hat remodelled and made fashionable. The cost is only **2/9** to **4/3.** (*If required, hats can be re-dyed to darker colours, preference should be given to Black, Navy, or Nigger, at an extra cost of* **1/6** *each.*) Gent.'s Hats also renovated — **4/6** to **6/-** (except Bowler or Silk Hats).

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I WILL TEACH YOU.

During twenty years I have taught thousands by post to *Play the Piano brilliantly.* If you are a person of ordinary every-day intelligence, and I accept you as a pupil, I *guarantee to teach YOU.* The difference is in INTENSIVE, simple as A.B.C., absorbingly-interesting *Method.* If a beginner, you are *trained right;* if already a player, you are *put right*—technical difficulties disappear like a dream, and soulless, mechanical practice is abolished for sane method that grips with interest all the time. YOU shall play in a third the time, with a quarter the work, at a tenth the expense. I can tell you of thousands of past pupils, from beginners to professional players with degrees of Mus. Bac., etc.

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A Good Player says: "Your System has opened out for me increasing delights. It is *perfect* musical training."

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The Aristocrat of Toilet Soaps.

Fills the Hand Basin with its delightful fragrance.

Of exquisite purity, it refines the skin and keeps the complexion youthful.

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Of all Chemists, Perfumers and Stores, and from :

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Loosen That Cold With Musterole

Have Musterole handy when a cold starts. Musterole gives you in a concentrated and economical form, the healing warmth of oil of mustard. Just put a dab of Musterole on your finger tips and rub it in. First you feel a warm tingling, then a soothing, cooling sensation and quick relief.

There is no unhygienic padding needed with Musterole. Use Musterole for bronchitis, sore throat, stiff neck, pleurisy, rheumatism, lumbago, croup, asthma, neuralgia, congestion, pains and aches of the back or joints, sore muscles, sprains, bruises, chilblains colds of the chest. It often prevents pneumonia and "flu."

Of all chemists, 2/6 a jar.

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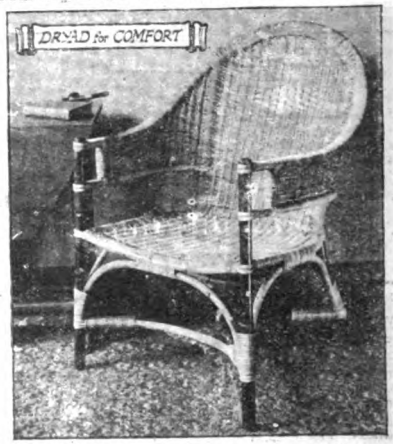
MILLER'S
MUSTEROLE
WILL NOT BLISTER

DRYAD BROWN CANE FURNITURE



Is of a pleasant nut brown colour, which polishes and improves with use, and never looks soiled. Red Malaccas are used in the frames to avoid wrapping. It thus offers a variety of colour, with advantages over pulp cane where heavy use is entailed.

The prices are reasonable, a good strong roomy chair, as illustrated, being £3 3s. 0d.

Each piece bears the label, "Dryad Furniture, Regd."

New Catalogue just issued, also Catalogue of the Pulp Cane Furniture may be obtained, post free, from the DRYAD WORKS, H DEPARTMENT, LEICESTER.

A Splendid Furniture Polish!

Everybody admires well-polished furniture! There is nothing like RONUK Furniture Cream for polishing highly-finished furniture of all kinds. It so easily and quickly gives a brilliant polish which lasts and which does not fingermark.

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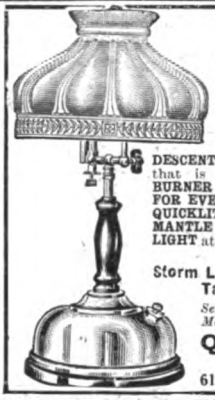
Sold everywhere in blue jars and glass bottles. NOTE.—The blue jars when empty make artistic vases. Manufactured by RONUK LTD., Portslade, Sussex.

Paysandu Ox-tails

A delicious ready-cooked meat meal

Of all Grocers



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"QUICKLIT"
the Original Matchlighting Incandescent Petrol Gas Lamp.

THE ONLY MATCHLIGHTING INCANDESCENT PETROL GAS LAMP on the market that is FITTED WITH AN AUTOMATIC BURNER CLEANER. A QUICKLIT MODEL FOR EVERY PURPOSE, indoor and outdoor. QUICKLIT lamps have ONE LARGE DURABLE MANTLE and give a BRILLIANT 300 C.P. WHITE LIGHT at a FUEL COST of ½d. per HOUR.

Prices:
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Send to-day for Illustrated List of all Models. All Goods are sent by return post.

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MANUFACTURERS' UNIQUE OFFER.

WE will weave a Cord Carpet for you in our Hand Looms to your own colourings. Examples of sizes and prices:

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Carriage Paid.

"Abingdon" Carpets

4d. in stamps covers postage of a descriptive Illustrated Price List and wide range of FREE patterns. Write to-day.

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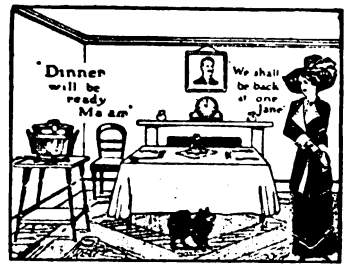

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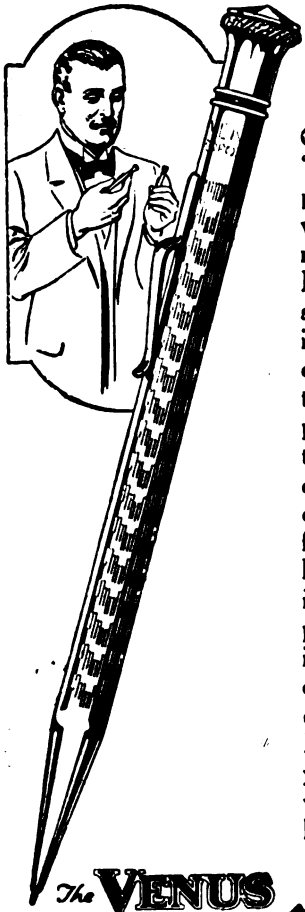

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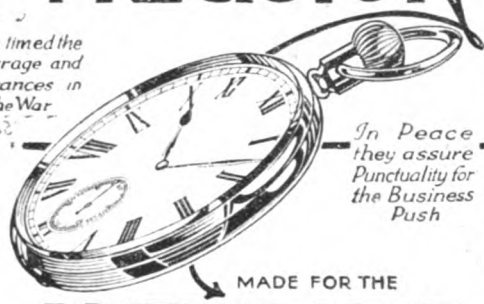

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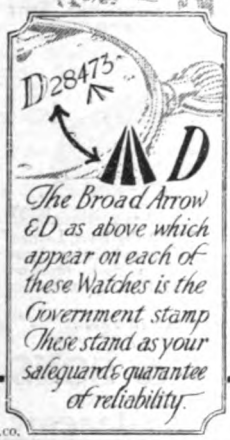

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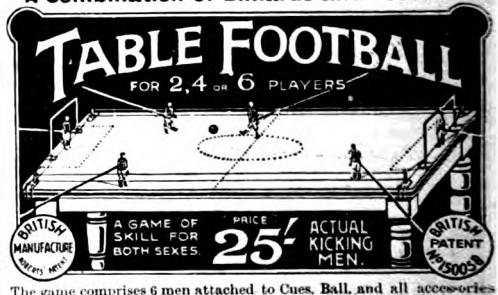

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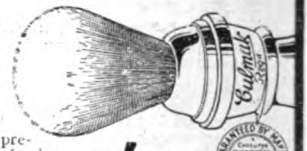

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Oak or Mahogany. Complete with accessories.

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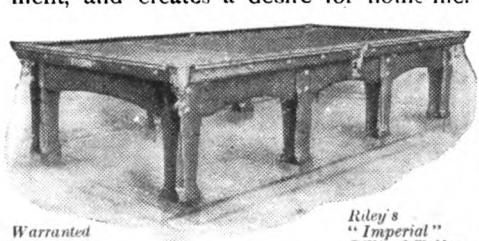

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....Thinness	....Biliousness	....Skin Disorders
....Rupture	....Torpid Liver	....Despondency
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Then watch the pains, aches, swellings, stiffness, and other misery disappear. They simply HAVE to go, says ALICE LANDLES, certified nurse.

Rheumatism can be caused in but one way. That is by acids and impurities in the blood. Chemical analysis and microscopic examination of the blood prove this beyond the possibility of doubt or argument, as any standard medical work will explain in detail. Of course, various conditions, such as exposure to cold and dampness, or committing certain errors of diet, can make rheumatism worse, but the primary cause always remains the same. Therefore, trying to get rid of rheumatism without ridding your blood and system of the acidulous impurities which directly cause this physical calamity, is exactly like trying to get rid of smoke without putting out the fire. Pain-causing and kidney-irritating uric acid is no different from any other acid in that *it must be neutralised by an alkaline liquid.* Nothing else can have just the same effect, this being an elementary principle of chemistry, of course. It naturally follows that to dissolve, neutralise and wash out the rheumatic acids the liquids you drink must contain the necessary alkaline elements to be absorbed into the blood and act upon the acids. These elements are easily provided. Simply get a small supply of the refined Alkia Saltrates compound from any chemist. As much of this as can be heaped on a sixpence should be dissolved in your tea, coffee, water, or other drink, and taken every morning. No trace of any bitter, salty, sour, or other taste can possibly be detected. Also it cannot upset or irritate even the most delicate stomach. The only evidence that you are taking a medicine will be the plainly noticeable relief from rheumatic pain which it quickly produces. In each package of Alkia Saltrates the refiners enclose an authoritative and extremely valuable treatise, giving useful diet hints and other interesting information for rheumatic sufferers.

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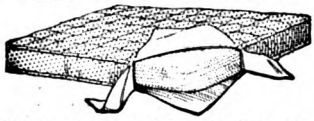

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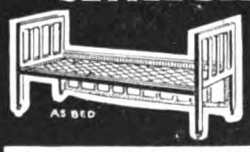

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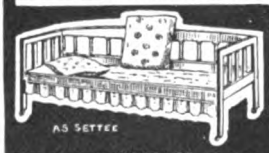

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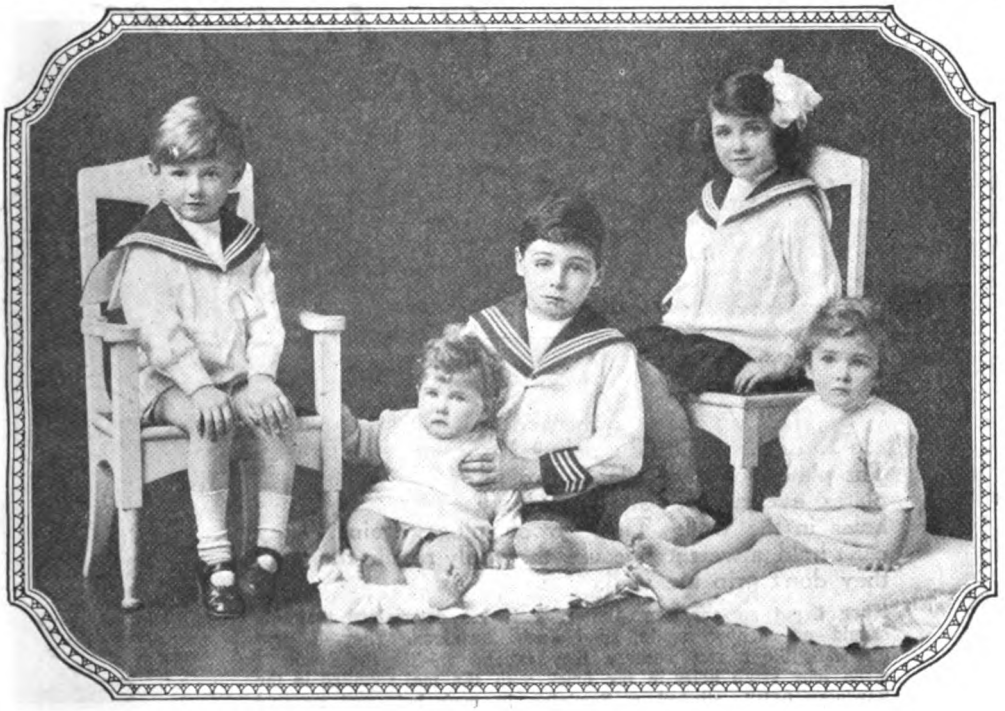

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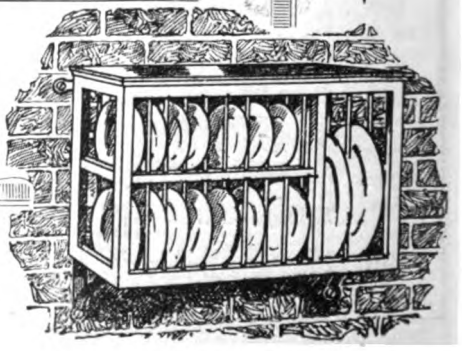

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Contents for November, 1922.

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☞ THE STRAND MAGAZINE is printed by the Newnes and Pearson Printing Co., Ltd., N. Kensington, and published monthly by the Proprietors, George Newnes, Ltd., 8 to 11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, England. Subscription price to any part of the world, post free, for one year, 15s. (Canada, 14s.). Registered at the General Post Office for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Entered as Second-class Matter at the New York, N.Y., Post Office. Cases for binding volumes of THE STRAND MAGAZINE may be obtained to order from Booksellers for 3s., or post free for 3s. 4d. direct from the Office. Half-yearly Volumes, 7s. 6d. net.

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To face back of Frontispiece

THE
STRAND
MAGAZINE
November, 1922.

JIM WAS BIFFED ON THE HEAD WITH THE BUTT END OF THE PISTOL AND FELL SENSELESS. A TERRIFIED WOMAN UNFASTENED THE STRING OF PEARLS AND HANDED THEM TO THE VILLAIN.

(See page 394.)

RESTITUTION

by

H. A. VACHELL

ILLUSTRATED BY H. COLLER

I.

EVEN in these post-war days younger sons of impoverished Scotch dukes have a market other than the Matrimonial Exchange and Mart. Billets were found for Jock and Jim Skelpic, known at Eton as The Heavenly Twins. The adjective was used derisively, for the Etonians were black-avised, hard-featured, hard-muscled Highlanders—tough customers.

They were tougher after the war.

Jock found a job in The United Motors Works. He could drive a "demonstration" car to perfection. And he could drive a bargain. Profiteers from the North who believed too fondly that a cadet of an ancient family must be a "soft thing" had reason to modify this belief after buying a car from Jock.

Jim was private secretary to Sir Otto Godolphin-Osborne, *né* Mandelbaum. Sir Otto, a naturalized subject, had changed his name in 1915. He had assumed a famous name. Why not? As he put it: "Der best ees goot enough for me." The younger son of a duke had been engaged by Sir Otto to attend to matters beyond (or below) the ken of a man absorbed in international business. The financier spoke of Lord James Skelpic as Master of the Horse. Jim, so to speak, pranced in front of Sir Otto's procession. Of the business transacted in the City or elsewhere Jim knew, or was supposed to know, nothing. Thanks to Jim's energies Sir Otto entertained in Lancaster Gate and in the Highlands of Scotland persons of importance who appreciate the best cooking and rare wines. Cabinet Ministers like to sip cabinet hocks seldom sipped outside the Fatherland. Magnates hasten to meet Cabinet Ministers. It is safe, perhaps, to affirm that more business is done when smoking the finest cigars than at any other time. And such business is not invariably "straight." A certain Captain of Industry never makes a "deal" after luncheon. His working hours, so he says, are from eleven till one.

The brothers shared a flat in Mayfair. Upon the death of their father, each had inherited ten thousand pounds. They regarded this, being twins, as joint capital. Half of it had been invested by Sir Otto in one of his get-rich-quick enterprises. Some of these ventures, apparently, impoverished everybody except Sir Otto.

II.

THE twins were smoking pipes together after dinner. Jock had noticed that Jim was not treating his Dunhill with the consideration it deserved. Clouds of smoke indicated a mind ill at ease.

"Anything wrong?" asked Jock, curtly.

Jim laid down a red-hot pipe.

"Yes. I've funked telling you. We've been robbed, old thing; skinned alive."

"By whom?"

"By my chief—damn him!"

Jock looked incredulous.

"By Sir Otto Godolphin-Osborne?"

"Let us speak of him by the rogue's right name, Mandelbaum. Hot stuff! So hot that he'll freeze when he reaches his ultimate destination. I was warned to have nothing to do with him."

"Cut that out and carry on."

"I trusted him," said Jim. "Of course, I was a fool, but not altogether a fool. I thought to myself: 'It won't pay *him* to swindle *me*.'"

"And he has?"

Copyright, 1922, by H. A. Vachell.

"He has."

"How, and when, and where?"

"It's a long yarn. Boiled down to essentials we have lost our ten thou.—every bob. I handed it over, you understand, to a man who is under obligations to me. He told me not to worry. I didn't. The cash was planked into one of his innumerable enterprises. He tells me cheerfully that he has dropped a million since Christmas."

"If that is true," said Jock, pensively, "we have no kick coming."

"But it isn't true."

"How do you know?"

"Read this."

Jim took from the pocket of his dinner-jacket a press-clipping. Jock read as follows:—

The pearl necklace which belonged to the late Marchioness of Beaudesert was secured at Christie's for ten thousand guineas by Sir Otto Godolphin-Osborne.

Jock whistled. Jim continued:—

"Mandelbaum—even dogs will refuse to defile his grave—bought that necklace with the money he stole from us, almost the exact sum."

"Plucked us clean, eh?"

"You're a sportsman, Jock. I expected ructions. You trusted me; I trusted him. I feel very chilly without those feathers, a naked gander. But I propose to get back our plumage—with your kind assistance."

"Mine? I don't know your dirty dog."

"Do you know his wife?"

"Not outside the picture papers."

"Good! The mere thought of our pearls on her neck makes me sick. Now—sit tight and hark to me. Those pearls were bought ten days ago. Mandelbaum had the cheek to show them to me, but I didn't know then that our ten thou. was up the spout. He locked them up in a small secret safe which stands in his private room. He went to Paris last week. When he got back he gave the pearls to his wife. She told me so with fat chucklings. She intends to wear them night and day. Only this morning did I learn that our certificates were so much waste-paper."

Jock nodded as Jim paused to refill his pipe. The twins were not like each other physically. Jock was sturdily built; Jim was tall and lean. Jim went on:—

"Mandelbaum is giving a party at his place on the river to-morrow night. I shall be there. The lawn runs down to the Thames. A road runs parallel to the tow-path across the river. Opposite Mandelbaum's boat-house is a big clump of brush. Farther on, at the top of the reach, is Shepperford Ferry."

"I know the ferry."

"I want you to ride a motor-bike down to that clump of brush to-morrow night, arriving there about nine-thirty. You can hide the bike in the brush. Then you will cross the ferry, turn to the right, and walk through a white gate. You will turn down a small path that leads to the boat-house. In the boat-house are a skiff, a canoe, and a punt. You will have time to bore holes in the canoe and the skiff just above the water-line."

Jock sat up, puzzled but interested.

"Presently," continued Jim, "you will hear me laugh. When you do, you will slip on a crape mask and pull a pistol out of your pocket."

"I catch on. I'm cast for the villain in the film."

"Yes; you will hold up her ladyship and me. I shall spring like a tiger upon you. You will biff me, not too hard, on the head. I shall fall stunned at my lady's substantial feet. You will demand the pearls and get them. Then you will punt yourself across the river, jump on to the motor-bike, and be awa' whilst my lady is screaming for help or administering first aid to me. I shall sleep—soundly, I hope—at Shepperford Lodge. We shall foregather here next day and divide the spoil. Got it?"

"Sounds too easy."

"Simple as Simon, simple as the mugs whom Mandelbaum has swindled."

"But how will you make sure of getting her ladyship near the boat-house?"

Jim winked impudently.

"You can leave that to me, my dear. Don't biff me too hard."

"Other guests may be about."

"Not if I know myself and them. This is a small party, three or four well-nourished Israelites and their wives. The unexpected—rain, for instance—may burke our plan. But the barometer is at Set Fair. Don't call it Robbery under Arms, but restitution. We shall get our own back with interest. Those pearls were a big bargain. Mandelbaum was offered by a dealer a thousand more than he gave."

"Can we sell them?"

"Of course we can—later on."

"Um!"

"Are you getting cold feet?"

"No."

"The thing is cut and dried if you play up."

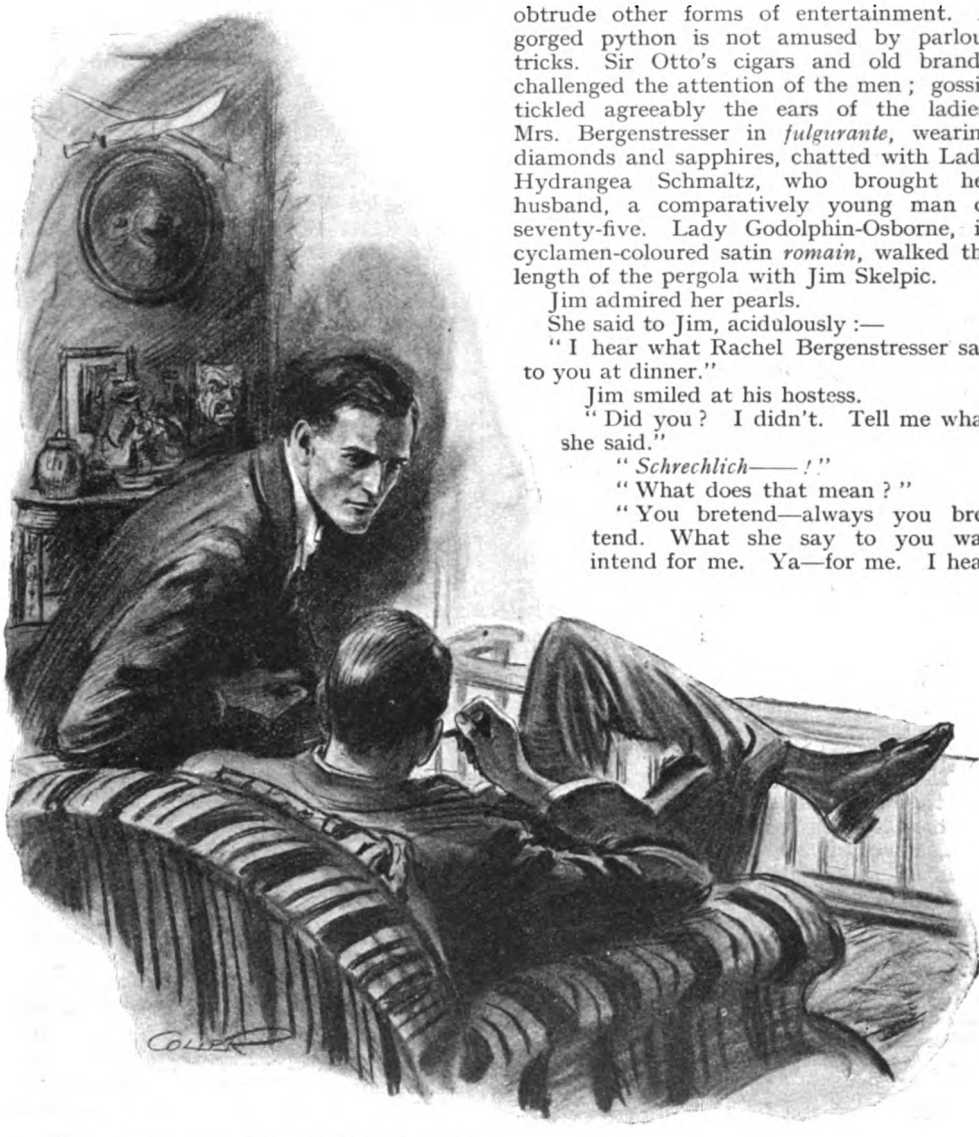
"Very promising, I must say."

"You're in?"

"I am."

III.

LADY GODOLPHIN-OSBORNE'S river parties were recorded in the Press as "select." As a rule *la haute* Bayswater was leavened by *la basse* Mayfair. Pukka



"Anything wrong?" asked Jock, curtly.
"Yes. I've funked telling you. We've been robbed, old thing; skinned alive."

dukes and duchesses gave Shepperford Lodge a miss. All Sir Otto's guests were well "done" in every sense of the word. The pains which attach themselves to persons born with the name of Mandelbaum are negligible if the pleasures of their tables are adequately emphasized.

Upon this particular evening the dinner was superlative. Everybody might have exclaimed on leaving the dining-room: "Fate cannot harm me, I have dined to-day."

After such a dinner it is overdoing it to obtrude other forms of entertainment. A gorged python is not amused by parlour tricks. Sir Otto's cigars and old brandy challenged the attention of the men; gossip tickled agreeably the ears of the ladies. Mrs. Bergenstresser in *fulgurante*, wearing diamonds and sapphires, chatted with Lady Hydrangea Schmaltz, who brought her husband, a comparatively young man of seventy-five. Lady Godolphin-Osborne, in cyclamen-coloured satin *romain*, walked the length of the pergola with Jim Skelpic.

Jim admired her pearls.

She said to Jim, acidulously:—

"I hear what Rachel Bergenstresser say to you at dinner."

Jim smiled at his hostess.

"Did you? I didn't. Tell me what she said."

"*Schrechlich*——!"

"What does that mean?"

"You bretend—always you bretend. What she say to you was intend for me. Ya—for me. I hear dat fat woman say to you: 'I am broud, Lord Shames, of being a Bergenstresser. I am not ashamed of being a Bergenstresser.'"

Jim said, soothingly:—

"I didn't quite catch what she said. Being a Bergenstresser, she spoke with her mouth full of peas, delicious peas. If she really doesn't mind being a Bergenstresser, ought we to interfere about it?"

"*Ach!* 'Ow you lofe your shokes."

Jim gripped opportunity.

"Let us wander away from Mrs. Bergenstresser. Let us listen together to the song of the river—*au clair de la lune*."

"Where is my Otto?"

"At work. Come."

They descended some steps, crossed a velvety lawn, and approached the boat-house. They had dined at nine; it was now nearly eleven. Near the boat-house a clump of rhododendrons screened a garden seat. Peace brooded upon the river and the landscape.

Jim laughed.

"You laugh?"

"I laugh, dear lady, because I am happy."

"Why are you happy?"

"Because I am alone with you."

At this moment Jock appeared. Jim, without hesitation, went on:—

"My mistake. Apparently, we are not alone. The inconvenient third has obtruded himself. Don't be alarmed! Let me deal with him."

The masked Jock held an automatic in his hand.

"I want your pearls," he said, politely. "I mean to have them. Hand them over. Don't scream!"

Jim jumped.

He was biffed on the head with the butt end of the pistol and fell senseless at the lady's number eight shoes.

"The pearls, please."

A terrified woman unfastened the string and handed them to the villain. He took them, bowed, and bolted.

Lady Godolphin-Osborne screamed.

A man in a mask punted himself across the river before two or three portly gentlemen reached the boat-house. Mr. Adalbert Bergenstresser, greatly daring, seated himself in the canoe, which sank harmlessly. Sir Otto administered first aid to Jim. In due time a constable arrived.

IV.

NEXT afternoon the twins met at the flat.

"You hit damned hard," said Jim.

"Sorry. I didn't mean to."

Jim rubbed a still sore head as he poured himself out a glass of barley-water. The Shepperford doctor had vetoed spirits. Jock produced the loot.

"A very even bunch," he observed.

They were. Too even, Jim decided. He examined them carefully. The best imitation pearls can defy the observation—not the examination—of experts. In weight, in lustre, there is no difference. But Jim, it will be remembered, had seen and handled the Beaudesert string.

"I believe they're sham!" he exclaimed.

"That," said Jock, calmly, "is my impression."

Much can be forgiven the twin brethren because they laughed uproariously.

"As we were," said Jock, when the ebullition passed.

"No," Jim answered. "The situation has changed. These pearls look like the Beaudesert pearls, but they are, as you say, too even. Had the Beaudesert lot been as even and as perfectly matched they would have fetched twenty thousand pounds. I heard a dealer assert that positively. Mandelbaum, for reasons of his own, took the real pearls to Paris and had them copied on the quiet. Why?"

"Ask another."

"I will presently. For the moment let us concentrate on this point. My lady believed these pearls to be real. I was not at my best and brightest when the police turned up, but I listened to the general cackle. My lady howled like a wolf bereft of her cubs. Why didn't Mandelbaum tell her and the police that the stolen pearls were sham?"

"Search me."

"I'm searching my own memory. I was almost concussed. Yes, yes—I have it. To calm his wife, Mandelbaum said in my presence: 'Don't get eggzited, Rebecca, die bearls was insured, my lofe, against all loss.'"

"Well, I'm hanged."

"Mandelbaum ought to be hanged—high as Haman, from whom, probably, he is lineally descended."

"The pearls *were* insured," said Jock.

"How do you know?"

Jock picked up an early edition of an evening paper. "Read that 'par.'"

A daring hold-up has deprived a lady of title of a superb string of pearls lately sold at auction at Christie's for ten thousand guineas. We are authoritatively informed that the gems were fully insured.

"Authoritatively——!" murmured Jim.

"Miching mallecho somewhere," said Jock.

Jock, still staring at the pearls, sat down in an arm-chair. Jim, singularly alert, remained standing.

"The affair has become one screaming note of interrogation," he said, in a low voice. "I had the real string in my hands a few hours after it was bought. I said at once: 'Lady Osborne will be a happy woman.' And my Chief replied sharply: 'I may not gif dem to her.' There, of course, he slipped up. He has been skating lately on thin ice. And he thinks me a fool. Mind you, nobody really knows how he stands—except himself. But I have a notion that he may have bought the Beaudesert pearls for two reasons. Number one—to bolster up his credit; number two—to get possession of portable property."

Jock nodded, much impressed.

"Credit is his life blood. And credit with such a manipulator as our dear Otto is largely a matter of public confidence. Would a man on the verge of bankruptcy give his wife a ten-thousand-guinea necklace?"

"A real thruster might."

"Give him his due, he is a thruster. Now, mark this: business has brightened since he bought the pearls—all along his not too particular lines. I'm inclined to think he bought the pearls intending to bolt with them. His market, rising unexpectedly, has made him change his plans. But everybody knew that he had bought the pearls. To satisfy the credulous public he gave this necklace to his wife. The Beaudesert pearls are where I saw him put them—in his private safe. His little game is plain enough. He'll claim the insurance money. If he gets it, we have helped him to swindle the insurance people out of ten thousand guineas."

Jock groaned.

"Cheer up!"

"I can't stick the insurance company being robbed by us."

"Keep your powder dry! I feel as you do about that. All the same, the divine law of self-preservation is still animating me. Our Otto has downed us twice. I take him on again to-morrow morning."

"Can I weigh in?"

"No. It will be a fight to a finish with no seconds in the ring."

Jock jumped up.

"But what are you going to do?"

"I'm trusting to the inspiration of the moment. We have a strangle-hold on him if he applies for this insurance money. I think he will apply for it to-morrow."

"If he doesn't——?"

Jim shrugged his shoulders and remained silent. After a pause he picked up the bogus pearls and thrust them deep into a pocket.

V.

THE private office of Sir Otto was luxuriously furnished. To reach it a visitor had to pass through the secretary's room. That communicated with main offices reassuringly dingy and, indeed, dirty. Gleaming nickel, plate glass, and mahogany as accessories to sharp practice have a transpontine glitter which arouses suspicion in the honest soul of John Bull.

Sir Otto was a collector of precious objects. The senses of taste and sight and smell were over-developed in a man who had started life in a shipping office in Hamburg. When he was pleased with himself, he rubbed softly a nose remarkable even in Hamburg. When he was perturbed in mind, he would remove his spectacles and polish the lenses. Without specs he could see farther into doubtful enterprises than Anglo-Saxons with normal vision.

His private safe was enclosed in a red lacquer cabinet, Chinese, of the eighteenth century.

It was his habit to spend an hour, from ten till eleven, with his Master of the Horse.

Jim found his Chief in high good-humour when he was greeted by that great man at ten sharp the next morning. For half an hour they talked about a place in Inverness. Jim was instructed to find out, not from the agents, the exact condition of moor and forest.

"The rent will be enormous," said Jim.

Sir Otto rubbed his nose. For two years he had not taken a Highland shooting. The inference was obvious.

"I anticibate goot times, Shames."

Good times for Sir Otto meant bad times for so many unimportant people that Jim winced. More, he was not yet accustomed to being addressed as "Shames" by a Hun. He said to Jock, "Shame on Shames!"

"For you, sir?"

"Ya—for me. For you too, Shames. You lose money. Same here. Soon we make money, moch money. Your friendts, too, dey lose money, but I make dem money. I sink or schwim mit my friendts."

He went on rubbing his nose.

"Heard anything about my lady's pearls?" asked Jim.

"*Ach!* Dose bearls! Perhaps der bolice will get dem. I leave soch matters to dem. It ees no longer my beesness."

"Really? No longer your business?"

"No. Because, Shames, I am insured. Der insurance beople will stimulate der bolice. I haf made my glaim. Soh!"

"Just so," said Jim.

He rose and strolled to the door between the private room and his own room. He opened it. Nobody was in his room. From the main offices beyond floated the hum of many voices, the buzz of busy bees collecting honey for Sir Otto.

"I haf not done mit you yet, Shames."

It was significant that with his secretary Sir Otto spoke English with a strong German-cum-Yiddish accent.

"I have not done with *you*," replied James, coolly.

To Sir Otto's amazement Jim locked the door and slipped the key into his pocket.

"Where," he asked, firmly, "are the Beaudesert pearls?"

Sir Otto removed his spectacles.

"Are you grazy, my young friendt?"

"The string that was stolen," continued Jim, very quietly, "was sham. I know it—and you know it."

Sir Otto blustered as he cleaned the lenses of his spectacles.

"Und how do you know it?"

"Never mind that. I do know it. Also I know *you*. You're up against it, Sir Otto. If I should tell the insurance people what I know, there would be trouble, very serious trouble, for you."

"*Gott in Himmel!* Blackmail!"

"No. Restitution. I'll hold my tongue, but I demand from you what I invested with you."

"— ! — !! — — !!!"

Students of German profanity can fill in the blanks.

Jim murmured, suavely:—

"Ten thousand guineas."

"— — ! — !! — !!!"

"I don't understand what you're saying, Sir Otto, but I'm sure it's something personally offensive. I raise you. I now demand eleven thousand guineas."

"— — ! — !! — !!!"

"Twelve thousand."

Sir Otto became dumb. Even his enemies admitted that he had *flair*, that curious sense of danger so lively in the fox and wolf. He knew that Jim knew. And he recognized in Jim the will to win, which other and greater Huns believe to be the inalienable possession of their race. He grasped the conviction that it was impossible to argue with Jim. He glanced at the bell on his Louis XV. desk.

"Touch that," said Jim, pleasantly, "and I go straight from here to the police."

Bluff! But could Sir Otto recognize it as such?

"Don't move! I'm about to make a reconnaissance. How thoughtful of you to leave the safe open!"

Jim walked straight to the safe, pulled out a drawer, and drew forth a small chamois-leather bag. He held it up.

"These are the Beaudesert pearls."

Sir Otto remained speechless for almost a minute. Jim, master of the situation, dictated terms.

"Write me a cheque payable to self for the sum I mentioned last. Endorse it. I'll send somebody out to cash it. Then I'll replace the pearls, and take leave of you, my benefactor, for ever and ever. You deliberately downed me. I have downed you. You Huns always make this mistake: you underrate the intelligence of others. The Devil seems to have you in his special care. Your rigged markets are booming. *I ant mieux* for you—and me. Get a move on!"

Sir Otto spoke querulously:—

"Und you go on mit your blackmailing?"

"Use that word again and I'll punch your head! This is restitution. I trusted you, and you robbed me. Now you will have to trust me. Make out the cheque. I'll fetch one of the clerks."

When Jim returned with an elderly clerk the cheque was ready.

"Slip over to the bank, Isaac, and bring back the cash in hundred-pound notes."

Isaac went his way. Jim played with the chamois-leather bag. He opened it and allowed the pearls to trickle through his fingers. Sir Otto glared at him. Jim said, lightly:—

"The sham lot you got in Paris are too even."

He replaced the pearls in the leather bag and tied the string.

"Before I put these back into the safe I want you to write a letter to the insurance people. You can state simply that the pearls have been returned to you, and that my lady and I were the victims of a very rough practical joke. I'll post your letter. Please write it at once."

Hypnotized by Jim, Sir Otto did so. Jim dropped the bag into the drawer and took the letter. Immediately afterwards the elderly clerk came back with the notes.

Restitution was made.

VI.

THE brothers met again before luncheon. When Jim had told his tale, the cash was divided.

"Where are the sham pearls?" asked Jock.

"In the shammy leather bag."

"What?"

"Yes. I would give up making execrable puns to see the Mandelbaum face when it looks into that bag!"

"But the Beaudesert lot?"

"They are here."

VII.

UNHAPPILY, nobody saw Sir Otto's face when, as a lover of beautiful and costly objects, he tried to hearten himself up by looking at the Beaudesert pearls. Perhaps the blow to his pride was at the moment even heavier than the one inflicted on his pocket. *Deutschland über alles* occurred to him as a singular perversion of fact, so far as he, a son of Hamburg, was concerned. He returned to Lancaster Gate that night a sadder and a wiser man.

My lady rushed at him as he crossed the hall and flung her arms around his neck. No doubt it served him right, but he was disconcerted and displeased.

"My Otto!"

"*Potzwelten*, Rebecca, 'ow you incommode me!"

"*Die bearls*," she gasped, hugging him tighter.

"Use that word again and I'll punch your head!"

"*Die bearls*," he repeated, half-smothered, in quavering tones. Destiny was kicking him too hard. Was it joy or anguish that informed his Rebecca's voice? Were the police lurking behind the arras? Was he doomed, after all, to appear in the dock? He disengaged himself.

"Look, my Otto, look! Regale yourselluf!"

Dim and dazed eyes saw a lustrous string of pearls.

"*Gott!*"

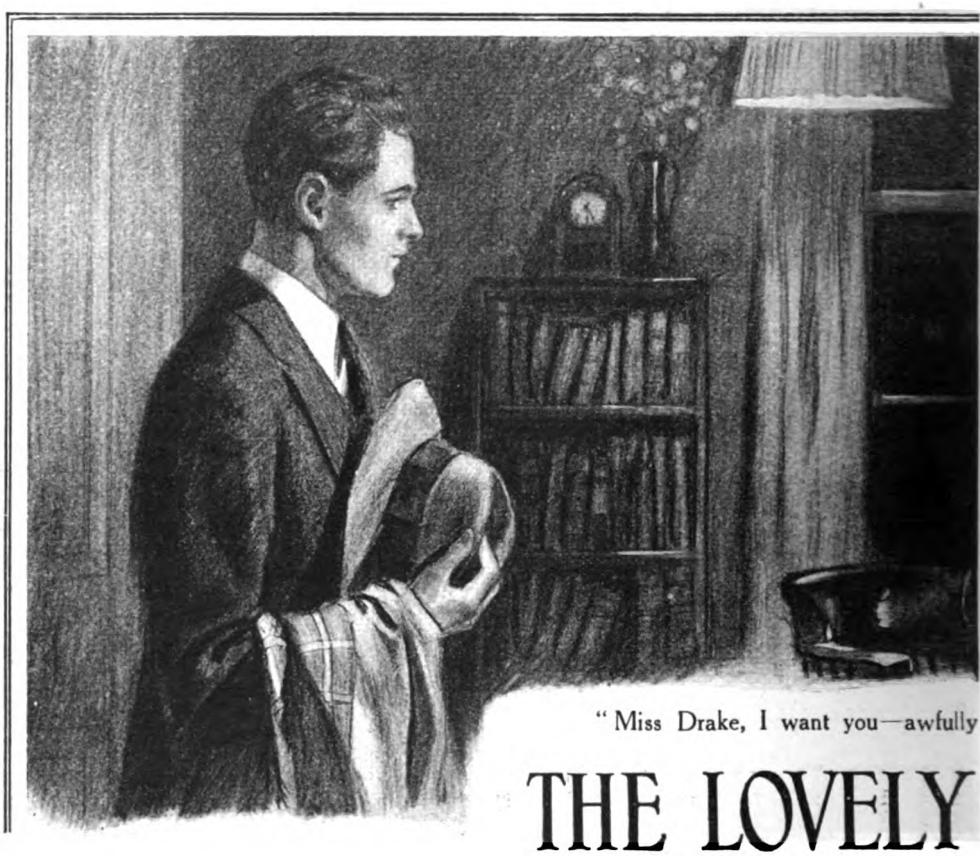
Rebecca Godolphin-Osborne, *née* Mosenthal, had to relapse into German. The pearls, it appeared, had reached the happy wearer of them after five o'clock in a sealed parcel delivered by hand. Upon a half-sheet of notepaper a few words were typewritten:—

Returned—with thanks.

LATER that evening Lady Godolphin-Osborne, with tears in her eyes, made a discovery. This time, as the lawful wife of a naturalized subject of England's king, she spoke in English:—

"I am so habby, my Otto, that my bearls abbear to me more beaudiful dan dey used to was!"

"Soh!" growled Sir Otto.



"Miss Drake, I want you—awfully

THE LOVELY

by J. J. Bell

SUMMONING my courage, I tapped.

"Come in," said the voice of Miss Hilda Drake, and, as I entered her office, it added: "Pretty punc., aren't you, duckie?" She was preening herself daintily before a mirror in the corner.

"I am relieved to hear you say so," I feebly returned.

She flashed round, and I fancied that I heard a muttered "Goodness!" I fancied, also, that she became slightly pink.

"Why, it's Mr. Derrick!" she said. "I thought you were Betty Falconer."

There was a pause, for I was wondering how I should begin, till she said, pleasantly:—

"Something I can do for you, Mr. Derrick?"

I blessed her for the opening. "There is, Miss Drake. I want you—awfully badly—to come and dine with me."

"Dine!" A dozen exclamation marks would fail to convey any idea of the astonishment she got into the solitary syllable.

"It is true," I said, after another pause, "that the word falls rarely from my lips; it is likely, indeed, that you hear me utter it for the first time. Still, there it is!"

Her grey eyes regarded me in a searching, though not unkindly, fashion.

"Like everybody else in this building," I went on, "you are aware that only last week I was very nearly evicted from my studio for non-payment of rent."

She made a little gesture of protest.

"Still, here I am, asking you—begging you, in fact—to come and dine with me."

"It's exceedingly kind of you, Mr. Derrick," she said at last, beginning to arrange the papers on her desk. I ought to have mentioned that Miss Hilda Drake is a writer, and a highly successful one. "But—well, you see, I have never gone out to dinner with a man."

Very respectfully I rejoined, "You have frequently gone out to lunch or tea."

"There is a difference, isn't there?"

badly—to come and dine with me."

LITTLE DINNER

ILLUSTRATED BY P.B.HICKLING

"A matter of a few shillings," I said, with an airy wave of my shabby hat.

Something danced in her eyes; then gravely she shook her head—a prettier head than ever I have been able to draw.

"You are considering the proprietics," I remarked; "but what have the proprieties done for us? Besides, you and I are getting to be old friends, Miss Drake. We have already met on eighty-seven occasions—at the club, at the houses of mutual——"

"Eighty-seven!" She laughed. "Do you keep a diary?"

"Not an ordinary diary. It is really a little book, which my rich aunt once gave me, in which one is supposed to record one's receipts and expenses; but as I so seldom have any receipts, I have got into the habit of entering happy events instead. I hope you don't mind being a happy event."

"I'm afraid I have never quite understood you, Mr. Derrick," she said, becoming thoughtful, "though, as you say, we are getting to be old friends."

"I trust you may never quite understand me," I returned, solemnly, "but, as a poor gentleman asking a lady to dinner, I assure you there is nothing about me the least sinister."

At that she smiled, saying, "I accept the assurance, and thank you once more for the invitation. But, as a matter of fact, Betty Falconer and I have planned to take a meal in town and go to a theatre."

I dare say my chagrin was apparent. Betty is an extremely nice girl, but just then I bitterly resented her existence on this planet.

"In that case——" I began, letting fall my hat.

"Excuse me," said Hilda, turning to the 'phone, which had started to ring.

It was impossible to avoid hearing her part in the conversation. Once I glanced at her, but without learning whether she was annoyed or pleased.

"Pardon me," I said, as she replaced the receiver, "but is it possible that Miss Falconer can't keep her engagement?"

"Well, yes," admitted Hilda, adding quickly, "So now I shall just go straight home."

Desperately I cried: "If you have one atom of friendly feeling, you will do nothing of the kind! I promise, if you insist, to let you go at nine o'clock, an hour which even the late Mrs. Grundy would have regarded indulgently."

Hilda went over and locked the safe, wherein reposed many manuscripts, for among her other activities she edited a monthly magazine. After that she faced me in her usual frank way.

"Mr. Derrick, does it matter that it should be to-night?"

"To me it is vital."

"Oh, I don't mean to be rude, but will you tell me why—without any compliments, please?"

"I will tell you when we have dined, and there will be no compliments. My reason for asking you is a good, sound, selfish one."

For a while she looked dubious, then all at once, as though an idea had struck her, a smile flickered.

"I will come, with pleasure," she said, and began to draw on a glove.

"I shall thank you all my life," I replied, and meant it then as I mean it now.

She glanced at her attaché case, and I offered to carry it.

"No: I'll come back for it on my way home. Since we are to dine, I don't want to be reminded of the office."

On the landing, with an upward glance, she inquired whether I had locked up my studio.

"What does it matter?" said I.

However, to please her, I ran upstairs and tried the door. It was unlocked I opened it and glanced around. A letter, obviously delivered by messenger, lay on the floor. It looked like a bill, so I let it lie. Having locked the door, I rejoined Hilda.

"The masterpieces are intact," I informed her.

"I do not know why you should speak so bitterly about your work," she said.

"I'm going to forget about it now," I returned, a little ashamed of my sarcasm.

"Why forget about it?"

I inquired concerning her new book. . . .

On the pavement I signalled a taxi.

"Please!" she protested; "it's so unnecessary on this fine evening."

"Let the poor artist have his little hour," said I.

In the cab she eyed me with friendly curiosity. "Something has happened to you, Mr. Derrick."

"You may have a guess, if you wish, later on, Miss Drake." And I got the talk back to her book.

At the entrance to Varry's Restaurant she stopped, hesitated, and said:—

"We have agreed that we are getting to be old friends. Don't think me ungracious when I take the liberty of suggesting a quieter place."

"Varry's is as quiet as any. There is no band."

"Oh, you know what I mean. I am ready to be entertained, but I'd rather not be *fêted*. When I accepted your invitation I——"

"On the off-chance of your accepting, the poor artist engaged a table here."

"Is it your birthday?" she asked, suddenly.

"Not exactly. Still, it may be said to mark the beginning of a new phase. Bear with me, and enter."

"Forgive me! I know I'm horrid," she said, with a quick change of tone. "I'm sure I shall love dining here."

Presently we were seated in a secluded corner.

"This is charming! What glorious flowers!" she said, and fell to chatting in her blithe way.

I was prepared for a frown when the waiter brought me the wine-card; but no frown appeared, even when I ordered a modest pint of Pommery—at, by the way, a most immodest price. She had, however, scarcely tasted her small glass of sherry. On the man's return with the champagne——

"This *is* an exceptional occasion—isn't it?" she asked me, softly

" Very exceptional," I answered, and she allowed him to fill her glass. As he retired, I said, " This is our eighty-eighth meeting. Before I drink to you, will you give me permission to call you Hilda ? "

" Why not ? " she replied. " Eighty-eight does seem almost adequate."

" Thank you, Hilda. Now, I have the misfortune to be registered as William, and commonly known as Bill. I know it's asking a great deal, but if you would kindly make an effort——"

Eyeing the bubbles in her glass, she said, " There *are*, I believe, names more difficult to pronounce."

And we both laughed.

In fairness to my manhood, let me say that I should have attempted to call her " Hilda " long ere this, but for one thing : the small formality acted as a sort of brake on my feelings. In spite of a certain comradeship between us, I had ever to remember that she was a successful writer and I a failure of a painter. To-night, however, the end of everything being so near, so inevitable, I dared to indulge myself for an hour and almost to ignore the end itself.

IT was a cheerful little repast, as happy a ninety minutes as I had ever lived. There was no noticeable pause in our talk till the waiter had retired after serving coffee.

At last she looked up, smiling.

" Now may I guess what has happened ? "

There was an eagerness in her voice which somehow perturbed me. I had planned to carry off the affair quite lightly. So far as she was concerned, it was to be a comedy—with a tiny touch of pathos, perhaps, but no more.

" Yes," I said, " you may have a guess, if you like."

" You have sold a picture, Bill ! "

It may seem strange, but I had not reckoned on such a guess, and I hesitated, wondering if I might, for once, lie to her—Hilda with her eyes so kindly bright, her lips so sweetly parted in expectation. For I had not dreamed that it could be of any real moment to her.

" You have ! " she cried. " Which one ? "

" Alas ! no, Hilda," I said, truthfully, " I have sold no picture."

" Oh ! " she murmured, as though something had hurt her ; and there was silence.

I had the conviction that I was making a mess of it at the very beginning. I had looked for some mild sympathy, but not this dear concern.

" I will tell you what has happened," I said, reluctantly. " My Aunt Agatha died in Rome last week."

On several occasions I had mentioned the old lady, who was generally supposed to regard myself with affection and my profession with abhorrence.

Once more Hilda's expression changed. Leaning towards me, she whispered :—

" Your rich aunt, Bill ? " And again there was eagerness in her voice.

" Yes," I replied, as lightly as possible ; " but by some strange inadvertence she omitted to leave me even her love."

" Oh, how *could* she, the old—— ! " It sounded like " fig," but there weren't any on the table. " I beg your pardon, Bill ; I ought not to have spoken like that, but——"

" As a matter of fact," I said, casually, " I had expected her to live for many years, and I have never flattered myself that I deserved anything from her. I'll admit that a legacy at the present crisis would have——"

" Crisis ? "

" Fiasco, I should have said. Your coffee is getting cold, Hilda."

She sipped it dutifully.

" I'd like you to believe," I went on, " that I'm not resentful because she has left the sixty thousand pounds to my elder brother, George, who——"

" Indeed ! " It was almost a snap, and at that moment I should have been very sorry to have had to present my brother George to Miss Hilda Drake—sorry for George, I mean.

" But I'm going too fast," I said. " Now, about the cri—the fiasco——"

" No," she said, gently. " Just tell me the good news, Bill."

I'm afraid I stared. " But there is no good news."

Wide-eyed she looked at me. Then her gaze went round the sumptuous place, dwelt for a moment or two on the beautifully-appointed table, and returned, distressed, to my face.

" Then why—why are we here ? "

" Don't be angry with me," I begged. " I'm going to explain."

" Oh, I'm not—angry." She made a small weary gesture. " I will listen."

" It won't make a long story. I asked you to dine to-night simply because I wished to have you all to myself for an hour ; and I wished to have you all to myself for an hour in order that I might have the memory of it in times to come. Which, you will admit, is a good, sound, selfish reason."

I drank some of the cool coffee. Hilda, chin on hands, was gazing down at the cloth. I could not have told that she had heard me.

" I did not seek to deceive you," I resumed, " when I declared that it was an exceptional occasion. Our little banquet,

besides giving me a memory to treasure, may be said to celebrate my retirement from Art." I was not looking at her, but I felt her slight movement. "To-night I shall quit the studio for the last time and——"

Her eyes were upon me. I had to meet them. They were full of a sort of horror.

"Bill, you are not going to give up!"

"Must, Hilda! I've spent my patrimony on learning my trade. Whether I can paint or not is for others to say; but I have proved that I can't earn anything by it."

"But you are young. You cannot give up!"

"Even youth cannot flourish on nothing a year; and I don't really enjoy getting into debt."

"Your brother—— Forgive me; that was impertinent, perhaps."

"It was friendly. But I must tell you now that George, though he has no patience with me as an artist, has shown me, as a brother, the greatest generosity. With a sum equal to half of his aunt's legacy, he is arranging to buy me an interest in a big sugar estate in Java. I expect to sail ten days hence."

"In Java!"

"Rhymes with guava, in case you ever think of writing a poem about it." It seemed necessary to say something foolish then. "I have a notion that the guava is a sort of fish."

"Jelly," she murmured, absently, looking away.

"A jelly-fish—thanks!"

She did not respond. "I suppose," she said, presently, "it is a long way off. Yes, I know it is."

"Pretty safely removed from Art circles. But even if George had that in mind, I can't blame him."

"Many people," she said, rather indifferently, "believe in your work."

"They don't buy it."

A pause.

"You have definitely decided to go?"

"My passage is taken."

Hilda sat up. "I dare say you will have quite a good time out there." Her manner had grown almost cold. She glanced at her wrist. "It's half-past nine."

"You're a bit sorry for me, aren't you, Hilda?"

"Oh, yes, I'm sorry." It sounded a trifle impatient. She looked to her gloves.

I summoned the waiter and settled the bill. In a way I felt that the whole thing had been a mistake, and yet I was glad of the memory, though it was not just what I had hoped for. But what precisely had I hoped for? To be honest, I cannot tell.

This time Hilda did not demur at the taxi. She talked a good deal during the short run, declaring brightly that she must read up about the place I was going to.

At the door of her office she held out her hand. "Thanks for the lovely little dinner."

"I'm going to see you home," I told her. "Don't forbid me that."

"I've just remembered a letter I must write."

"How long will it take? No, never mind! I'll wait up in the studio till I hear your door bang. You won't run away, will you?"

She smiled faintly. "No, I sha'n't run away."

As I went up the stairs, I wondered if she had meant to suggest that it was I who was running away.

I was rather glad to get into the stillness of the studio, and I did not switch on the lights. There was nothing more for me to do there. My "works" were all ready for removal; a few, as souvenirs, to old friends, the rest to a dealer who had promised, with a shrug, to do what he could. After all, no man likes to be beaten, and for seven years I had worked really hard and found most of my happiness in the studio. But of these things I thought little as I sat there in the dark. Nothing greatly mattered beside the fact that I was going away—from Hilda. And I felt that in some respect I had blundered and hurt her feelings. Such a true little friend she was, too! I tried to assure myself that she did not despise me just a little for having given up. I wondered whether, had my aunt's will been different, I should have made a name in the long run; whether, also, I might, in time, have won more than a girl's friendship. Alas, there is nothing so vain as this "wondering."

The cigarette I had lit on entering had smouldered away when I became aware of a sound at the door. It seemed late for the caretaker, but I presumed he had forgotten his key, and went, unwillingly, to open.

Hilda stood there, under the landing light, a glaring affair, as it seemed then. It was with a shock that I saw, or fancied I saw, she had been crying. She was, however, smiling at me.

"It occurred to me to ask you a question," she said. "But first let me tell you that once, when I was going to give up writing in utter despair, a friend persuaded me to hold on—and a little later a manuscript was accepted."

"Your friend knew what he, or she, was talking about, Hilda. But even if I could wait—and I would not funk a spell of positive suffering—I have given my word

"You're a bit sorry for me, aren't you, Hilda?"

to my brother. Already, probably, he has parted with his money."

She nodded kindly. "Still, I'll put my question. Supposing there was a sudden run on your pictures; supposing, all at once, people began to call and buy them; supposing you sold quite a lot. Would you not ask your brother to give you a chance to carry on?" Her beautiful eyes were looking into mine, but soon they wavered and dropped.

In all my life nothing like that revelation has ever happened to me.

"Hilda," I said, "do you want me to fall down and kiss your feet?"

"I—I don't know what you mean!" she cried, with faltering indignation.

"Kindest girl in all the world," I said, and I suppose my voice shook, "what on earth would you do with all my pictures when your agents had dumped them at your door?"

I thought she was going to break down, but presently she gave a little laugh. "I dare say I did it badly," she said, "but if a friend can't help a friend, what *are* we in the world for?" Her mouth quivered, yet with another laugh she took a step forward and picked up the neglected missive. "Is that how you treat your letters?" she demanded, handing it to me.

"You shouldn't have troubled. It's only a bill," I said, turning it over. "No, by Jove! it's from George!"

"I'll wait downstairs," she said, promptly.

"Please don't go. It's a bit dark down there. I'm quite ready." And I prepared to lock up.

"But you must read your letter."

"Well—if you'll excuse me. George, good business man, is always mercifully brief." I tore open the envelope and read:—

"Dear Bill,—I feel I have not been quite decent. I wanted to do what I thought best for you, but I now doubt whether I should be justified in ordering your whole life. Will you let me invest the money for you, and give me your word that you will not touch the principal for ten years? If so, you are a free man. Come and talk it over, any time up to midnight.—GEORGE."

I know I was simply shaking as I said:—

"I'd like you to read this, Hilda."

She shook her head. "I think it means that—that you are not going"—her voice grew faint—"not going to Guava—I mean Java." What a queer, weak little laugh she gave then!

"Hilda!" I caught at her hands. "Hilda, does it—can it matter to you?"

"Oh, no; not *very* much; still, I dare say——"

Eventually we went out into a world grown perfect in all respects. In a perfectly-appointed taxi, perfectly driven by a chauffeur with perfect manners, Hilda, who is not (fortunately for me) without a practical side, suddenly exclaimed:—

"And, oh, Bill, isn't it nice to think that, after all, the lovely little dinner wasn't wasted?"

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 112.

SOLDIER and sacred fane; each one displays
The scene of boyhood's strenuous, happy days.

1. In epithet of autumn may be found
   A word that rhymes with colour, man, and sound.
2. His surname? Think of steam; take water, too.
   His Christian name? That we require of you.
3. He saved the dryad's oak, and from her won
   Promise to meet him ere the set of sun.
4. Print you may see, or cloth, or wool, forsooth.
   This statement is a literal untruth.
5. French, Scotch, and English—equal parts we take,
   And English is the total that we make.
6. This verbal fragment in a town would show
   A mighty man who lived there long ago.
7. Process that changes king to earl can turn
   His daughter into something that can burn.
8. The French bear little things—we, in our pride,
   May deem them very great and dignified.
9. In river on a map the home is seen
   Of this fair (here beheaded) heroine.
10. Take noun in earlier verse, and rearrange,
    To trisyllabic synonym then change.
11. With altered head, his habitat is met;
    With altered tail, a lunar epithet.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 112 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on November 10th.*

Two answers may be sent to every light.

It is essential that solvers, with their answers to this acrostic, should send also their real names and addresses.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 111.

(The Third of the Series.)

"I SEE thy beauty gradually unfold"—
The laureate and the lady here behold.

1. Sir Walter Scott of this "stern huntsman" wrote.
2. 'Tis "wrought by want of thought"—from Hood we quote.
3. "The wonder of the world," in Shakespeare's play.
4. Its "ancient wall" find in Macaulay's lay.
5. Moore tells us where "white jasmine flowers" have blown.
6. Longfellow's stream, "content to be unknown."
7. In Byron's verse read of his "death or flight."
8. Pope speaks of her as "still divinely bright."

PAX.

1.	T	im	E
2.	E	vi	L
3.	N	avarr	E
4.	N	orb	A
5.	Y	eme	N
6.	S	ong	O
7.	O	sca	R
8.	N	atur	E

NOTES.—Light 1. Hunting Song: Waken, lords and ladies gay. 2. The Lady's Dream. 3. Love's Labour's Lost. 4. The Battle of the Lake Regillus. 5. Lalla Rookh. 6. Songo River. 7. Oscar of Alva. 8. An Essay on Criticism.

Solvers who write to the Acrostic Editor and desire answers to their queries should, with their letters, enclose a stamped addressed envelope, and he will endeavour to reply.

Stage Asides by SYBIL THORNDIKE

Photos. by Florence Vandamm, etc.

I WAS looking into the mirror in my dressing-room, thinking that after all Time was treating me rather kindly, when a well-known journalist put in an appearance.

"It's nearly twenty years since I first saw you on the stage," he remarked.

It is not seemly, nor diplomatic, to make such a remark to any woman. I was about to protest when it dawned on me that he spoke the truth.

When I look back over the years, my brain is crowded with memories of the ups and downs of my stage career, the difficulties I tackled and overcame, the disappointments I faced without losing heart. The one thing that stands out above all others is the hard work.

At six months.

Age four.

Age six.

Age twelve.

The popular conception of a successful actress is that she leads a life of luxurious ease, that for her it is "Roses, roses all the way," the plaudits of the multitude, and the wealth of Cathay for the asking.

This is a false impression, largely due to the popular novelist, who is apt to distort the truth. The actress of fact and the actress of fiction bear but a faint resemblance, and the young actress who is as keen on her art as I was, and am, finds little time for anything except work. Learning lines is a laborious business, especially when playing in repertory, and to have to memorize ninety pages of manuscript and create a part in a week, as I have done, taxes the body and brain almost to breaking-point.

I can hardly remember the time when I did not want to act. As a tiny tot I used to dress up in all sorts of things—hats and dresses purloined from my mother's wardrobe on the sly, tablecloths taken from the table and flung over my little

shoulders to form cloaks—and strut about an imaginary stage acting some imaginary part for all I was worth. It was only play, of course, but it seemed very real to me then.

My brother Russell and I were mad on acting, and my father, who was the Vicar of St. Margaret's, Rochester, smiled at our enthusiasm. We used to give little plays in the parish hall, and I am certain we enjoyed the plays more than the parishioners who formed the audience.

The professional player is apt to smile at amateur theatricals, but if some of the professional players were half as keen as some of the amateurs, their standard of acting would be sensibly raised and the art of the theatre considerably improved. Amateur theatricals form a good stepping-stone to the legitimate stage, and much may be learned from them. The amateur takes part in these performances because he loves to act, and a little more of this spirit in our theatres would soon help to revive the drama of to-day.

I was just under fourteen years old when my mother wrote to Sir Charles Wyndham to tell him that she thought I had a real talent, and liking, for the stage. I was delighted when Sir Charles wrote back in a most kindly manner and fixed a day for seeing me. The great day came, and I, who had never been ill before in my life, was too ill to keep the appointment. I wept with disappointment.

"Never mind," wrote Sir Charles, "I will see her next week."

Again he named a day, and once again I was too ill to go.

"It's an omen," said my father. "She mustn't go on the stage."

So for the next few years I studied music, and at eighteen I was giving recitals at Steinway Hall. An injury to my wrist marred my musical career, and I turned once more to my first love—the stage.

Twenty years after my mother wrote to Sir Charles Wyndham, I am associated with Lady Wyndham in my first essay into managership at the New Theatre. I often wonder what might have happened if I had not been too ill to see Sir Charles when I was a girl!

The stage is supposed to hold the mirror up to life, and on the stage, as in real life, the unexpected often happens and causes no little amusement. I was acting at the Little Theatre in a play called "Cupboard Love," in which a young gallant was supposed to enter a lady's bedroom by mistake. He was coaxed into the wardrobe on a pretext, and then locked in, while the lady sent the key of the wardrobe to a friend with instructions to bring it along the next morning. The whole point of the play turned on the fact that next morning the friend discovered the wardrobe was not locked.

Sybil Thorndike at home.

The play this evening went to the usual ripple of merriment until the young gallant, tiring of standing on his feet, decided to sit down and make himself comfortable for the night. Unfortunately, in sitting down the door sprang open, and there was the young gallant staring at me in amazement! The humour of the situation struck me so forcibly that I just collapsed in a chair, and laughed until I could laugh no longer. Then I went across the stage, slammed the wardrobe door, and we carried through the play to its conclusion. This mishap gave away the whole point of the play, but apparently it went quite unnoticed by the majority of the audience. They thought it was all in the play.

It is really surprising how a good actor or actress can make the most amusing slips, and carry them off without the audience noticing anything at all. I have heard some delightful Spoonerisms uttered on the stage, but one of the funniest slips of all occurred

in "As You Like It." Rosalind has to say: "Men have died from time to time, and worms have eaten them." But somehow on this occasion she got a trifle mixed, and, going down the stage, she declaimed in her best manner: "Worms have died from time to time, and men have eaten them!" Her method of delivery was so grand that no one noticed what she said—no one, that is, except the other players, who nearly choked in their efforts to keep from laughing.

Many of my most interesting experiences, grave and gay, are associated with the days when I was playing in Ben Greet's company in the United States. No one can conceive what restless mortals we were, always journeying onward and hither and thither like the Wandering Jew.

Sybil Thorndike with her mother.

Our repertoire consisted of fourteen plays—mystery plays, morality plays, Shakespearean and other plays—and I was supposed to be able to play any of the parts at a moment's notice! The veriest simpleton in theatrical affairs can imagine that it is not a case of "Roses, roses all the way" when travelling with such a stock company.

Late to bed and early to rise was the order of our lives. Often after finishing a play at night we would be up at four in the morning, waiting at the station for the train that was to take us to our next halting-place.

Sybil Thorndike with her husband (Lewis Casson) and their children.

Imagine our feelings when the train came in about seven hours late! This sort of thing was always happening, and how we used to cool our heels, mutter things beneath our breath, and regret the hours we might have spent cosily in bed!

Late trains, of course, meant that we were late in arriving at our destination. The audiences, however, were wonderfully patient, and they just sat and waited until we turned up. Sometimes it was ten o'clock at night before our performances began, and judging by the good temper of the audience I believe they would have waited willingly all night rather than miss the play.

Those were crowded days. We were never still, always we were moving. We played in every university town in the United States. I recollect that for three months we played in a different town every day and gave two performances a day. But when we really hustled we managed to give a performance in one place, pack up our bags and baskets, and give another performance in another town on the same day.

Looking back, I don't know how we found time to eat or sleep at all. Yet we were as happy a company as you could meet on the road. The way Ben Greet managed us and managed that tour was perfectly wonderful. We never missed a single performance from first to last, and we played in every town that we were billed to play in, which is rather remarkable considering the difficulties of transporting our baggage and scenery.

Ben Greet loved work as much as he loved the stage. His whole life was wrapped up in the theatre, and, to him, it was almost a sacrilege to think of breaking faith with the public.

I WELL remember a day we were playing at Ravinia Park, Chicago. I was looking forward to a swim in Lake Michigan, when all the youngsters who played the parts of fairies in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" crowded round and begged me to take them as well. Accordingly I took the kiddies along.

"Now, children, you may paddle, but you mustn't go above your ankles," I told them.

They laughed and splashed and frolicked, as children will, until I thought they had been in the water long enough. "You've had enough now. Get along to the beach and wait for me there. I'm just going for a swim," I said.

The kiddies went to the beach and I swam out into the lake. I was enjoying my swim immensely when I heard affrighted screams. I turned round, to find that one of the fairies had followed me and was being swept away. I swam for the disobedient fairy and managed to grab her, while the children on the beach shrieked with terror.

The child clung to me so desperately that I thought we should both be drowned. I could make no headway. I saw the landing-stage near, and I struggled hard to reach it, only to be carried past. I was becoming very afraid and very exhausted when a post loomed up, and with an effort I managed to clutch it as we went swirling by.

"What do you mean by carrying on like this?" said Ben Greet.

"Well, I couldn't let the child drown, could I?" I replied.

"That's all very well," he answered. "But what about my show?"

That was always his first thought. The impression he created in my mind was that he could easily get another fairy, but it would be rather difficult to replace his Helena!

It was while on this tour that I first played a man's part at a moment's notice. "Come on," said Ben Greet, "I want you to play the nephew to the king."

"But I can't do it," I protested.

"You've got to," said Ben.

I went off to the dressing-room and cried my eyes out, but in the end I donned the trunks of the king's nephew, stuck on a beard and moustache, and went through with the part. Later, the big-wig of the place, who knew all the members of the company, came round to see Ben Greet. "Who's that funny little fat man?" he asked. "I've never met him before."

He was referring, of course, to me, and from that moment I was known to the other members of the company as "the funny little fat man"!

One of our audiences in Atlanta, Georgia, made merry at our expense while we were playing "As You Like It." Half-way through the play the whole stage collapsed and we fell amid clouds of dust into the cellars beneath. We sorted ourselves out and counted up our bruises, while Ben Greet clambered forward over the ruins and faced the audience. He held up his hand to quiet the uproarious laughter. "Ladies and gentlemen, if you will excuse us for a short time while we are making temporary repairs, we will finish the play," he said.

He was like that. Nothing dismayed him. He always rose to the occasion.

Sure enough we finished the play, but we trod the boards like cats on hot bricks, wondering all the time if the stage was going to give way again.

It was down in Georgia, too, in a town

called Cordele, that I had the creepiest experience that has ever befallen me in my career. My brother Russell Thorndike was the stage manager, and he came to me in an awful state.

"I say, Sybil, there's a gallows outside your dressing-room," he said.

I pushed open the dressing-room window. Outside I saw the gallows, just as Russell had stated. I was horrified. Realism was all very well, but this was going too far.

Worse followed, for a little later another member of the company came in. "The murderer's escaped," he exclaimed, gloomily. "They say he's bound to be about here somewhere. He's the best shot in the town, so Heaven help us if we fall foul of him."

Cordele was not a particularly cheerful place. Apparently the citizens used part of the theatre as a jail, for while we were acting that night two Negresses who had committed murders were imprisoned under the stage. A day or two later both were hanged on the gallows that I saw outside my window.

I was rather glad that we managed to pack up and leave Cordele without running across that escaped murderer.

WHEN we came to the Pacific coast, we played at Santa Barbara, where all the monks from the monastery attended our performance of "Everyman." Not one of them had ever been to a theatre before, and they all went into fits of laughter as Death came stalking on the stage. They were so unversed in things theatrical that they appeared to think the play was a wonderful comedy!

The incident reminds me of another amusing experience I had in "Everyman." I took the part of Beauty, and "Beauty" was written across my chest in big letters. As soon as I appeared a shout of ribald laughter went up from the students. "Gee! Look at Beauty!" they howled, and kept it up all the time I was on the stage.

A similar outburst of laughter greeted me during another performance of "Everyman." This evening I was playing the part of "Good Deeds," and was duly equipped with the necessary halo, which I wore on the top of my head.

Unfortunately the halo was pivoted, and as I stepped on the stage one of the mischievous members of the company gave it a flick with his finger and set it merrily spinning. Quite unconscious of what had happened, I tripped upon the stage with my spinning halo, and it was some time before I realized what the people were so delighted about.

Those were the days when I first met President Wilson during a voyage to the United States. He was at that time President of Princeton University, and was quite unknown. As is usual, we got up a concert to entertain the passengers during the crossing, and I arranged to play the accompaniments and the incidental music.

We discussed the likeliest chairman, and our choice fell upon Mr. Wilson. We went to him.

"Will you be chairman, Mr. Wilson?" we said.

"Certainly," he answered, with a smile.

A very good chairman he made, too, but I little thought that our chairman would one day be President of the United States.

Life is full of surprises, but surely none greater than this—that the quiet man who was chairman at our little concert should come to fill one of the big places in history by playing one of the most important parts in the greatest Peace Conference the world has ever known.

I have a vivid recollection of one of our train journeys being brought to a sudden stop by a terrible crash. Some of the coaches overturned, and we struggled out as best we could and were forced to sit beside the wreckage until daylight came. In spite of the train smash, we played that night as usual.

Another time I was in an earthquake. This was in San Francisco, where I was awakened about six o'clock one morning by a sudden shaking of the bed. I tumbled out in a fright, to find the floor rocking under me and the wardrobe knocking against the wall. It was awful to feel the whole place trembling beneath me, and I gave a big sigh of relief when all was still again.

Next day the citizens treated the whole thing as a joke. They were not to know that the following year an earthquake was to bring their beautiful city tumbling in ruins about their ears and sweep many of them into eternity. Perhaps it is as well for our peace of mind that we cannot dip into the future.

I recall an evening during the war when I got out of the train in Waterloo Road to find a horde of panic-stricken people pouring into the Tube for safety. I tried to fight against the seething current of humanity, but I was powerless. Men, women, and children were rushing for shelter like mad people. I struggled against them, but their numbers overwhelmed me. Then I saw a policeman trying to direct them.

"Get me out, sergeant," I said. "I must get out."

"You can't! There's a raid on," he replied.

(1) Sybil Thorndike as Hecuba, Queen of Troy, in "The Trojan Women," which is considered her greatest part. In this old Greek play she rises to the height of tragedy when her grandson Astyanax, who is slain by the conquerors of Troy, is laid in her arms for burial just before she is driven off as a slave.

(2) As Medea, which Euripides wrote about 2,400 years ago, Miss Thorndike gives a brilliant study of the sorceress who revenges the faithlessness of her husband by killing her children and slaying her rival with the aid of a magic cloak which destroys anyone who wears it.

I screwed up my courage and bolted for the Old Vic. with the sound of the guns giving speed to my feet. The people at the theatre were not more pleased to see me than I was pleased to arrive in safety!

Throughout all the air raids we did not miss a single performance at the Old Vic. When other theatres closed down, we kept on, often to the most startling accompaniment of guns and bombs. One night there was such a severe raid that the audience could not leave the theatre after the performance, so we got up an impromptu entertainment and gave them songs and recitations until after midnight, when the "All Clear" signal went.

Another time we were playing "King Lear," when the news came that there was a raid. We carried on the performance, while the gunfire grew louder. It was interspersed with those dull reverberations that told of dropping bombs.

"But I must," I said. "I've got to get to the Old Vic."

The policeman used his authority and his weight to push a way for me through the crush of people. We got to the entrance, and I saw the searchlights stealing over the sky and heard the sound of guns, much too close to be pleasant.

"You've got some pluck, miss," said the constable. "Good luck to you."

The guns were kicking up pandemonium as my brother Russell, who was acting the part of King Lear, was declaiming:—

"*Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!*

You cataracts and hurricanes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,
That make ingrateful man!"

Russell had just recited the passage: "And thou, all-shaking thunder, smite flat the thick rotundity of the world," when there was the most appalling explosion, and the theatre shook. Russell was so angry that, going down-stage, he cried: "Crack nature's moulds, all GERMANS spill at once!"

The audiences at the Old Vic. are intelligent, quick to seize the slightest point, and their applause swept through the theatre and drowned the sound of the guns, so delighted were they with the aptness of the misquotation and so in sympathy with the sentiment.

The applause had barely died away when the Fool capped Lear's remark with: "Here's a night that pities neither wise man nor fool!"

Once more the house rocked with delight. I am afraid the Germans would have thought us a strange people if they could

Sybil Thorndike.
A present-day portrait.

Sybil Thorndike as Tosca, the Italian woman who sacrifices herself in order to save the life of her lover.

have seen us at that moment. They would have realized that we did not take our pleasures sadly, but gladly.

Certainly that night the raid gave an added zest to the performance. Not until the play was over did we discover how near the Germans had been to us in the Old Vic. It was the night that Waterloo Station was bombed.

Only those who have acted at the Old Vic. can realize how keenly appreciative of good work are the people who attend the performances. They hunger for good plays and good acting, and they will gladly stand for hours rather than miss the play. Not only will they stand waiting for the doors to open, but they will, if needs must, stand cheerfully all through the play.

This love for the best that the theatre can give should be fostered in the people. No one knows how hard we all worked to carry on the Old Vic., and it is a great relief to me to know that the generous gift of thirty thousand pounds by Mr. George Dance has saved the People's Playhouse.

There has lately been a revival of public interest in the question of whether marriage spoils a woman's career, more particularly on the stage. Many confirmed bachelor girls enter the theatrical profession with a fixed determination to devote their whole lives to their art. They look upon marriage as a handicap and assert that the actress with home ties cannot give the necessary time to her profession.

To me, all this talk about marriage spoiling one's art is nonsense. I believe that no actress can be truly great until she has married. The greater her experience of life, the greater the artiste she should become. It is logical to assume that those who have tasted the joys and sorrows of life will portray the emotions on the stage more successfully than will those players who think to improve their art by avoiding the responsibilities of marriage and the anxieties that home life entails.

I do not find family ties have a bad influence on my art. Quite the contrary. They have given me a wider vision, a greater understanding, and more sympathy. It is quite possible to be a good actress and a good mother at the same time.

My friends thought I was wonderfully plucky to marry an actor, and Lewis Casson's friends thought *he* had a fine courage to wed an actress. I fancy they were all rather influenced by the saying that "Two of a trade never agree." Such things, however, did not weigh with us at all, and we have both proved to our own satisfaction that the old saying is utterly false.

In our early married life my husband and I were not overburdened with money, and we were compelled to furnish in the simplest possible way. We picked up a bit of furniture here, another there, anything anywhere so long as it was cheap. Often my husband would himself carry home some prize such as a chair from Caledonian Market. He just defied the conventions. To him they did not exist. Once I was out walking, very smartly dressed, with my brother Russell, when he noticed my husband returning from a furniture-hunting expedition.

"Good Lord, look!" gasped Russell.

I looked, to see the best man in the world walking cheerfully along with a roll of felt about six feet long under one arm and a cheap washstand under the other. We turned away, and pretended not to see him.

When I am asked what is my favourite part, I always recall the reply of Ellen Terry to the reporter who asked her a similar question. "The part I am going to play," the famous actress replied.

It is the same with me. My favourite part is always my next part—the part I am going to play in the future.

Of course, I love all Shakespeare's parts, especially that of Rosalind in "As You Like It"; while the Greek tragedies written by Euripides over two thousand years ago make a big appeal to me, particularly "The Trojan Women" and "Medea," in which I play the parts of Hecuba and Medea. It is a real joy to me to act these parts, which were originally played over four hundred years before the birth of Christ. I well remember that the first part to bring me luck in the West-end was Sygne in "The Hostage," a play by Claudel, which was produced by Edith Goodall for the Pioneer Players a few years ago.

Soon after starting my present season at the New Theatre I had a most indignant letter from a member of the audience. "You have been favoured by nature with charm above the average," he wrote. "Why, in Heaven's name, do you make yourself look so hideous in 'Jane Clegg'?"

It brings to mind another occasion when I spent ever so much time in making up as a gipsy to play in "As You Like It." I stepped upon the stage feeling that I had excelled myself in the way of make-up, that I had never looked so charming in my life.

After the performance there was a little reception, and a student came up and shook me warmly by the hand.

"Say," said he, "your performance was just fine. But what a pity you had to make yourself look so homely!"

It was one of the very few times when words failed me.

A DEAL IN EXCHANGE

by

PERCEVAL GIBBON

ILLUSTRATED BY S. ABBEY

OUTSIDE the Gare du Nord, upon the busy pavement of the Rue Lafayette, he stopped suddenly, a snag in the busy current of the foot-traffic, and made a wide-armed gesture of furious anger and helpless despair. One of the outflung arms took a stout Parisian business man across the chest, who at first was unwilling to receive apologies; it was the offender's meekness, his figure of a timid, rather shabby and ageing man, a stranger adrift in Paris, which softened him. He grunted incoherently and strode on, leaving Samuel Lawrence to wander upon his way.

For it had come to this with him. Save for something under two hundred francs in his pocket and the clothes he stood in, he had nothing left in the world—not even the rights which are common to all men. Two days before he had been a clerk in the London office of the Beach Camera Company, poor and unconsidered enough, yet with a livelihood, the liking of some few friends, the toleration of many. And the previous day, fetching the factory wages from the bank, he had turned in one moment of dazzlement, in some grand climacteric crisis of nerves and morals, into a thief; and only an hour or two previously he had been robbed of his spoil. Nothing remained.

He wandered on. Evening was at hand, and he was bitterly weary; it was needful that he should find a roof somewhere. And as he went, his aching brain drummed for ever on the manner of his loss. The plump, middle-aged gentleman who had shared his first-class compartment with him from Boulogne—he was the gainer. When the train reached Paris, he had been prompt to get up, claim the services of a porter, and pass his two suit-cases through the window to him. Then, briskly, like one accustomed to arrivals and departures, he had descended from the train and disappeared in the wake of his porter. It was not till he was out of sight that Lawrence discovered that the suit-case he had left behind was one of his own, and the one he had taken in its place contained over three thousand pounds, the property of the Beach Camera Company.

Lawrence had charged wildly and vainly after him, only to find himself bumping into the *octroi*, the municipal Customs of Paris. He thought at first that it was the police he had to deal with, and was thrown into a panic; he came free to find himself in the street. He had not even brought away the substitute suit-case which the stranger had left behind. And he knew that he dared not make inquiries through the only channels that were likely to be fruitful. It was when he had first realized this that he had thrown out his arms in the first sincere and unfettered gesture of his life.

He came abreast of a *café*, with seats and small tables under an awning. He hesitated, but he was weary to the point where shyness breaks down, and he found himself a chair. A waiter brought him a glass of beer; he would have preferred tea, but everybody else seemed to be drinking beer, and he had not the energy to argue about it. He slouched down in his tiny iron chair to take what repose its barren contours could give him, and sat thus till an English voice at his elbow roused him to attention. It was only two undistinguished young men, clerks in some English agency in Paris, chattering idly.

Samuel Lawrence drank his beer and awaited his opportunity.

"Excuse me, I'm a stranger here." The young men turned to him. 'Could you kindly tell me where I can get a bed to-night? I've—er—lost my luggage, and I want—I'm afraid I want a rather cheap bed."

"Heaps of places," said the youth nearest to him, indifferently. 'Little hotels are scattered all over the place. Of course, if you want something *very* cheap, you'd better go up to Montmartre."

"Montmartre?" repeated Lawrence. 'Er—could you direct me?"

Together they gave him a general indication of the route he must take; they were not entirely agreed about it, and disputed over it, forgetting him the while. But in the end he had a vague idea of the way, and departed to grope it out.

It was scarcely stranger, nor more

incongruous, that Samuel Lawrence, bending under those stresses which are prone to bear upon the man of fifty, fearful of being discharged, suffering a little from the after-effects of influenza, should become of a sudden a thief, than that night, sweet with the breath of a ripe spring, should find him climbing the hill towards the more sinister slums of the quarter. He brought to that incubator of the more violent sins his mild, vague face with its gold-rimmed pince-nez, his greying moustache with its drooping ends, his shoulders that stooped with much bending over a desk. Inhabitants of the place, flitting by as noiselessly as bats, or standing at zinc-topped bars open to the street, turned to look at him. He passed among them unconscious of all save his own trouble.

At a death-trap of a house which called itself an hotel, and produced a fat, hairy proprietor, collarless and coatless, who spoke English, he got himself a bed at last. For ten francs paid in advance he was granted a cupboard of a room, with a narrow bed in it, a deal table bearing a ewer and basin about the size of a cup and saucer, and a chair.

"It will do," he said, as he inspected it. "I am very tired."

"You want a drink?" inquired the proprietor. "I got whisky, cognac, wine, everything."

Samuel Lawrence shook his head. "Not to-night, thank you," he answered.

The gross man looked at him closely. "I t'ink you sleep all de same," he said, and departed.

LAWRENCE could never be sure afterwards whether he locked the door or not before he lay down on the stony bed in the room. Despite his weariness, it was some time before he could sleep; the ramshackle house was alive with noises. First, people below were singing; then there was an altercation outside his door between people who seemed to speak the same language as fire-crackers; and then a woman screamed continuously for five minutes, and thereafter sobbed rendingly. But at last he fell asleep, to wake later with an irresistible impression that he was not alone.

He found his matches and lit his candle, the room's only illuminant. There was no one in the place but himself, and the door, which he had imagined to be open, was closed. He sat up in the bed and stared about him. He was about to put it down to a touch of nightmare, when he heard the unmistakable creak of footsteps on ill-laid boards outside his door. He rose, and, candle in hand, opened the door. It was not locked now, at any rate. Without, the narrow passage extended to left and right; the stairs descended in the middle of it. But there was no one in sight.

He returned to his room, closed and locked the door, and was about to go to bed again when his eyes fell on the clothes he had folded upon the chair. With an inarticulate cry he picked them up and hurriedly searched them, first in feverish haste, then methodically garment by garment. Both quests yielded the same result. His pockets had not been so much robbed as gutted; it was not only his money that was gone, but everything they had contained. Not even his handkerchief remained to him.

From some church near by a clock struck four.

It was then, sitting on his bed by the light of his candle, that he knew the true quality of the life of the man who has made himself an outcast. He had no resource; to appeal to the police or the British Consul was to ensure his own arrest. All hands were against him.

At eight o'clock he was dressed and downstairs. The fat proprietor, with the crumpled look about him of one who has slept in his clothes, was in the entry as he went forth. The creature gave him a grin of infinite malice and amusement.

"You sleep good?" he inquired.

Samuel Lawrence looked at him and knew himself vanquished. The creature had strength of a kind, both of physique and personality; he himself had none of either. He turned and went on down the hill.

It was a morning of the true Paris glory, with a sky of soft radiance and a balm upon the air. The freakish fate which buffeted him along took him to the grand boulevards, where the trees along the sidewalk were resplendent with tender green. He was not shaved nor properly washed, and he had not breakfasted nor was he to breakfast; he moved at a tramp's gait through the lively crowds, reflected in all his humility and misfortune in the brilliant windows of the shops. He could improvise no plan; he knew he was at the mercy of incalculable forces; and when it was nearing noon and he was already footsore, the freakish fate took pity on him.

It happened near the Madeleine. He was going along the sidewalk, limping a little now, when he saw, coming in the other direction, a figure whose view made him halt with a gasp. A plump and prosperous figure it was, with a high-held, serene, and debonair face under a grey Homburg hat, sprucely tailored, with a neat pomaded moustache. It was the stranger of the train, the man who had taken the wrong suit-case.

The man passed him; Samuel Lawrence came round as on a pivot; then, in an access of energy, followed and overtook him. He touched him on the elbow.

"Excuse me," he said, nervously.

The other spun on his heel, and it seemed to Lawrence that an immense relief showed upon his face at the sight of himself. Then it darkened.

"What the devil d'you mean by layin' hold of me like that?" demanded the stranger.

"What the devil d'you mean by layin' hold of me like that?" demanded the stranger.

"I beg your pardon for startling you," said Lawrence. "But I believe you took my suit-case from the train yesterday in mistake for your own."

The face before him cleared up. "Oh, it was yours, was it? Yes, I recognize you now. Why didn't you come after me? I found my case all right, but I couldn't see a trace of you."

Lawrence explained. The well-fed stranger nodded.

"Well," he said, "your case is all right. I left it in the *consigne*—the cloak-room, that is. But like a silly fool I found this morning that I'd lost the ticket. Still, you can get it all right."

Lawrence trembled. Then the case and its secret were still intact. "Would you kindly tell me how I should proceed?"

"Certainly," said the other. "It's easy enough. You go to the *consigne*, you know, and you claim it. You'll have to prove your identity and all that in the usual way and describe the contents of the thing. Then you open it, and when they've checked your description they hand it over to you."

"Oh!" said Lawrence, and presently, "Thank you."

"I'll drive up with you now and see you through it, if you like," volunteered the other.

Lawrence shook his head hopelessly. He became suddenly aware

that his chance-met acquaintance could develop a peculiar steely piercingness of gaze. The bland and healthy face was in a moment acute and formidable.

"No?" said the stranger. "All right. But come and have a drink. I want to talk to you." And when Lawrence still hung back he added, startlingly: "Better come, Mr. Lawrence!"

Lawrence collapsed and surrendered. He suffered himself to be led away.

"Are you a detective?" he gasped.

The other considered as whether uncertain if he were or not. "No," he finally decided. "Nothing of the kind. Your case is in the London papers this morning. That's how I knew your name."

SEATED upon a plush bench in the interior of a *café*, with whisky and soda before them, they talked.

"An' the boodle is in that case?" said the stranger. "Three thousand and odd of the best—and I took it by accident and put it out o' reach. Me! Well, we got to get it somehow."

"What did the papers say?" faltered Lawrence.

"Oh, them! Seems your camera people are suspecting anything from the truth to loss of memory. Seems to me they trusted you pretty far. But never mind about that. What have you been doing since yesterday?"

He was persistent, and soon he had the full story of Samuel Lawrence's first night in Paris. He laughed.

"I shall have to look after you a bit," he declared. "At any rate, until we get that bag. But the first thing for you is a bite of lunch. *Garçon!*"

"But," hesitated Lawrence, "are you—er——"

"Go on," encouraged the other. "Say it. Am I a crook? Is that it? Why, of course I am, and a good one—not a bloomin' beginner like you! My name's Neumann; Pony Neumann my friends call me; and you're lucky to have run across me. Ah, here's the menu."

It was an admirable lunch which Mr. Neumann selected, satisfying yet delicate, at once stimulating and rewarding the appetite. And as they ate, he talked.

"That damn ticket!" he philosophized. "Suppose I wasn't very careful where I put it, the case not being mine; and so it goes and loses itself. I've known men hanged or guillotined through accidents as little as that. And think o' that thing blowing about in the gutter just as if it warn't worth better than three thou.! There's romance for you! Take some more o' this wine."

Lawrence sighed.

"I put it in my overcoat pocket," said Mr. Neumann. "Then I suppose I pulled out my gloves or my cigar-case, and it went adrift. I searched that coat this morning, and all I found was a ten-centime piece that had somehow got into the breast-pocket. I searched the suit I'd been wearing, too. But nothing doing."

"Then how——" began Lawrence.

"Ah!" said Mr. Neumann. "That's what I've got to think out. But whatever I arrange, you'll have to be on hand. You see, I was fool enough to explain at the *consigne* I'd taken the thing by mistake. So you'll be wanted. Where are you going to stay?"

Lawrence smiled weakly. "I've got no money," he reminded Mr. Neumann.

"Ah, but you have!" retorted that financier, reaching into his bosom. "You're an investment, my boy. See this? That's a thousand-franc note, that is, an' I'm goin' to invest it in your expectations. An' you'd better get a shave an' a bath right away. An' look here; you find a place to stay, an' meet me here to-morrow at the same time, eh? An' now you better bump along."

Lawrence rose obediently. There was no part in this conversation which he was competent to sustain, and obedience was his only source. A waiter ran to help him with his coat and hand him his hat.

"All right, I'll tip him," said Mr. Neumann over his cigar, which he was lighting. "To-morrow, at the same time, remember."

"To-morrow, at the same time," repeated Lawrence, mechanically, and took his departure.

The barber's at which he got himself shaved and his hair brushed demurred a little at changing a thousand-franc note, but achieved it in the end. Lawrence tipped generously.

"Thank you," he understood the barber to say in French. "And here is M. Neumann's hat."

"Eh?"

The barber smilingly turned the hat over, as one who has played a clever trick. And lettered in gilt upon the leather sweat-band within, plain as a signpost, was the name P. Neumann.

"They gave me the wrong hat," said Lawrence.

He took it, however, and stood with it in his hand, undecided whether to return with it at once to the *café* or postpone it till to-morrow. It was a smarter hat than his own. He saw the corner of a piece of green paper sticking up from inside the sweat-band, and plucked it out.

"Ah!" said the barber. "*Un billet de consigne!*"

He recognized the word *consigne*, and gasped. It was, it must be, the lost cloak-room ticket; Mr. Neumann had put it in his hat instead of in his pocket, and forgotten

"All right, I'll tip him," said Mr. Neumann over his cigar, which he was lighting. "To-morrow, at the same time, remember."

it. He startled the barber by uttering a loud cry and dashing from the shop.

That afternoon the Beach Camera Company received a telegram from Paris which startled them considerably.

"Am here," it said. "Money intact. Returning to-night.—Samuel Lawrence."

And in the end, loss of memory was held to be the true explanation. Mr. Neumann, however, had another word for it.

CHOPIN.

CHOPIN

AND THE MAZURKA IN B MINOR

A SHORT STUDY ON THE INTERPRETATION OF ONE OF HIS MOST LOVED WORKS.

by **MARK HAMBOURG**

OF all composers, pianists regard Chopin as their own particular and most precious possession. He understood how to write for the piano, and the piano alone, as no other master did, and his creative genius found in it the perfect medium for all its expression.

I want to give a few ideas about the interpretation of one of the best known and most popular of Chopin's shorter works, the Mazurka in B Minor; but before doing so I think it may be of interest to consider a few details about his life and personal characteristics in relation to his compositions.

It is in some ways unfortunate that many people when playing Chopin's music take an exaggeratedly sentimental view of its character. They play it with too much pedal, they distort the melodies beyond all measure with *rubato* effects, and altogether give what seems to me a rather sickly and neurotic interpretation of his works which is somewhat degrading to the nobility of his many-sided imagination. I think this may be partly due to the general public knowing very little about Chopin's personal outlook and the man that lay behind the composer. Following the usual tradition about him, people take it rather for granted that Chopin was a charming but weak, effeminate creature, a hothouse flower whose perfume is intoxicating rathe than elevating.

It is no doubt to a certain extent true that Chopin's genius flourished in the atmosphere of Paris *salons* and adoring ladies; but the creator of the F Minor Ballade, the Sonata in B Minor, the Polonaise in A Flat, etc., shows a strength of passion and a manly virility of conception in these masterpieces which prove that there was a masculine side to his mind.

Chopin is, of course, a unique figure in the world of music, and his works bear the impression of his life and personality in an extraordinary degree. He was born in Warsaw, Poland, on February 22nd, 1810, of poor but refined and educated parents. His father was French, his mother a Polish lady of gentle birth. His father, Nicholas Chopin, was Professor of French for some years at the Lyceum in Warsaw, and the young Chopin grew up in an atmosphere of refinement. He early evinced signs of extreme musical susceptibility, and when still quite a child was much moved, even to tears, when hearing fine music. It is also recorded that he had a decided talent for acting, and that he used to take part in comedies and little plays acted in the family circle, where those who saw him prophesied a great future for him as an actor! Very young he started playing the piano, and his parents recognizing his talent had him well and carefully taught, so that at the age of nine he was a "wonderchild" in the *salons* of Warsaw, and people spoke of him as a second Mozart. However, already, at the early age of ten, he did not care much for playing in public, a repugnance which remained with him through life. For even at the height of his success as a performer in Paris he never played in public concerts except when financial necessity drove him to do it.

CHOPIN'S boyhood and early youth were passed under very happy conditions—an adoring but understanding family in sufficiently good circumstances to make life comfortable, a charming circle of admiring friends, intelligent and efficient teachers—in fact, everything pleasant except good health. Chopin was delicate from childhood, and the disease which eventually robbed the world of him so young was probably already engendered in his system at birth.

Chopin's life can be divided really into two distinct periods: his youth and happy family time in Warsaw, and his manhood

with all its triumphs and sorrows in Paris, where he settled in 1831 after some travelling in Germany and Austria to make himself known as a concert pianist. As a public performer he achieved the greatest success with his improvisations, which he did at most of his appearances in concerts. According to those who heard him, the most original and delicious melodies and passages fell from his fingers in endless profusion whenever he touched the keyboard.

Chopin was twenty-one when he arrived in Paris, and he remained there with few exceptions until his death in 1849.

As a pianoforte player Chopin was, from the accounts of all his contemporaries, quite unique. His charm and delicacy of touch could not be rivalled, and in the interpretation of his own works he showed an originality and a brilliancy that thrilled his hearers. It is a tradition that his tone was very small and weak, and later on in his life the critics used to complain that he could not be properly heard in a concert hall, and that his was *salon* playing. But this was due to his being so ill latterly. For in his zenith, when he first came to Paris, Liszt and others of his most distinguished fellow-artistes declared that he produced fine, robust volumes of sound and powerful *crescendoes* when the mood so took him, and that his ideas often seemed too great for utterance. In such a mood he would carry away his audience by the power and intensity of his performance.

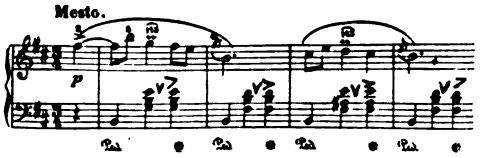
This confirms my theory that the real Chopin of health and youth, in his prime, was a mentality full of noble imagination and grandeur of conception, and that his virility became sapped later by constant illness. Also, perhaps, his natural refinement of nature, intensified as it must have been by his daily surroundings in Paris (living constantly in the artificial atmosphere of "Society"), may have tended to effeminize him and rarefy his vision. There is no doubt, however, that he possessed some quality in his playing that was quite different from anyone else's, a spirituality, and an originality of *rubato*, which imparted to his performance a constant feeling of inspiration. Yet he always kept within the rhythm of the music, even though playing with so much *ad libitum*. Contemporary musicians used to remark how Chopin's pupils and imitators endeavoured to copy this *rubato* to an extent that utterly distorted and destroyed the form and rhythm of the music, and this remains still too often the case in the rendering of Chopin!

It is told of Chopin that when he was feeling well he liked to use a Pleyel piano, but when he was ill and had no strength to produce a full tone he preferred the fuller-sounding and easier-actioned Erard. The accounts of him as a young man when first in Paris tell of his high spirits and love of practical jokes, and his amusing, somewhat ironical, somewhat sarcastic observations on people and things. It was only when his ever re-occurring struggles with illness made him miserable that he changed into the melancholy pathetic figure, weary of living, with which tradition associates him. Schumann has best described Chopin himself and his music when he said of him: "Sweetness combined with strength"; and it is that strength imparting nobility to the sweetness which Chopin's most ardent admirers so often fail to discover, or emphasize, thereby taking away something from the measure of his greatness.

SOME of the most delightful and characteristic examples of Chopin's genius are those works which represent national dance rhythms, such as the mazurkas and polonaises. These breathe so pre-eminently the Polish spirit of chivalry and romance. They do not only express the specified form of the composition in the narrow sense of dance music, but under Chopin's magic touch they develop into poetical fantasies, elegant, inspired, full of delicate imagination.

The Mazurka, Op. 33, No. 4, in B Minor, which I have selected as the subject of the present essay, is certainly one of the finest works in that form, and is much beloved alike by professional and amateur pianists. It is developed in a much more extended manner than Chopin's other compositions in the same measure, and could almost be called a mazurka fantasia. From the outset this piece should be played in a spirit of endeavour to reproduce the real mazurka rhythm as it is danced up to this day in Poland.

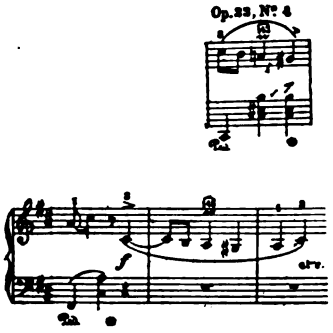
There is a legend that a mazurka can only be played or danced with the correct spirit by a Pole or a Russian, but I think that this is an exaggeration, and that most people with a good sense of rhythm can acquire the right swing of it if they understand where to put the necessary accents. I give here the first five bars of the mazurka, with the rhythm marked as I conceive it:—



Bars 1 to 5.

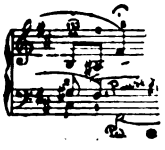
All the dance-proper part of the mazurka should be played, I think, with the accents

as given in illustration No. 1; in fact, the whole of the first part up to Bar 49 must be given with a rounded but firm rhythm, even when superimposed by the melodic episode which is introduced at the sixth bar :—



Bars 6 to 9.

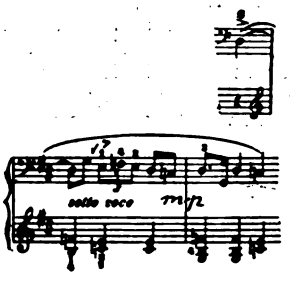
This melody should, to my idea, be played like a question being asked, and this atmosphere of interrogation should end at the second beat of the thirteenth bar, where I make a long pause :—



Bar 13.

The real dance measure of the mazurka is then resumed.

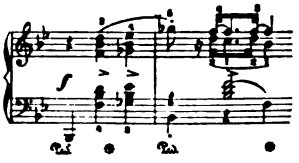
On the last beat of the seventeenth bar another episode is brought in. This development I imagine to represent a Polish gallant requesting a young woman to dance with him, and it should be played in a little slower *tempo*, with insistence and softness :—



Bars 17 to 19, etc.

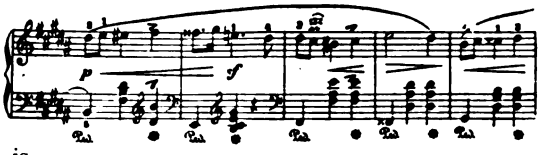
This theme continues until Bar 24. Once more in Bar 26 the dance is taken up again and then the same episode as was introduced in Bar 17 repeats itself, and then again the main theme of the mazurka until the end of Bar 47.

Here, after a modulation of two bars I imagine that the young man's request has been granted, and there is a headlong rush into the mazurka in its most turbulent expression, a real wild Polish dance.



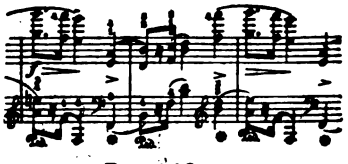
Bars 50 and 51, etc.

This continues until Bar 66, after which the whole of the beginning of the composition is repeated for another sixty-four bars. Then there enters a new melody, most beautiful, as delicious as any that Chopin ever created, and I imagine it myself as a love-song between the dancing couple. Although lyric in spirit, yet in the playing of this melody care must be taken to produce the tiny accent on the third beat of the bar which will preserve the rhythm of the dance :—



Bars 130 to 134, etc., continuing for 32 bars.

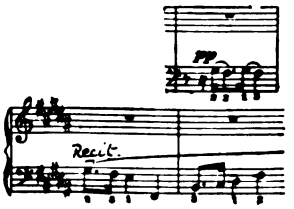
This theme proceeds to Bar 162, when much more trenchant accents should be introduced, suggesting to me the rage and indignation of the irate father of the young "Panna," who discovers, and objects to, the attentions of the gallant to his daughter and takes her away from the ball.



Bar 162, etc

In Bars 177 to 179, I imagine the disappointed youth left alone and meditating on the fickleness of fortune and the unfairness of fathers! These bars kept *pianissimo* (*PP*), and in effect aiming at conveying

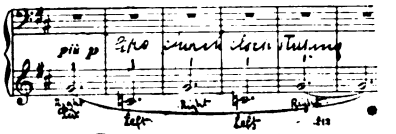
the reflections of a chagrined spirit, should be played almost in the manner of a recitative and continue to Bar 213.



Bars 177 to 179.

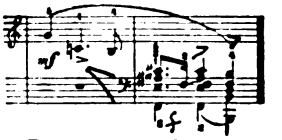
Then, as the greatest grief of the youngest man cannot go on for ever, these bitter reflections are brought to an end by the dance starting once more. This time the mazurka measure must sound sad, being played much softer than at the beginning of the composition and with a tinge of Byronesque gloom about it, the *diminuendo* of tone always increasing until it reaches *pianissimo* (*PP*).

At Bar 218 five notes appear which I think ought to be made to resemble church bells striking the hour. *The final note of the bells is held on through the next bar, producing the effect of the sound dying away.* Five o'clock! An hour when all dances should finish in Poland, or, for that matter anywhere!



Bars 218 to 223.

These notes should be struck with alternating thumbs, first right, then left thumb. The last strike of the bell over, with an imprecation of rage, cursing everything, hopes frustrated, joy thwarted, the young man rushes out abruptly into the darkness in despair, and disappears!



Bars 224 and 225.
Abruptly—in a quicker *tempo*.

To sum it all up, this whole mazurka must be played with exactitude of rhythm and finesse of expression, creating an atmosphere of romance and gallantry, combined with nobility and distinction of tone and elegance of touch.

AN EXERCISE IN ANAGRAMS.

IN the following letter each word, or group of words, in heavier type may be transformed into a single English word, thus making perfect sense when the whole letter is read. Proper names are indicated by capital initial letters.

The **Ape Groans,**
He Made a Din.

My dear **Glide Near,**—

I am sitting beside our **tocsin-tuner** and everywhere is **o sour egg.** My **apter** is apt to **apter** of the **sand place** at home, but it cannot hold a **apter** to ours. Without **side grin** to **seen hut** and prove **sir moke** my **meat is on it** of it is—a **navy heel** and wonderful **o ma! pa ran!!** Though **a cent dip** at times sights like these make me wish I were a **shaper** to sing in **shaper** divine. But perhaps I am **nail cuff.**

All my **use each orb** plants are doing well, but I have had much **blue rot** with my **wee pet ass,** owing **try an apple** to the **hurt dog.**

At Messrs. **Fried Legs,** Ltd., last week I was put in a very **nice vile bacon** and awkward **damn ripe etc.** by a **pocket animal. Stole buds** becoming nervous she left her **lines gang** in my **lamb rule** and **E.P.D. ? Paradise!!,** leaving me in my **nice organ.**

Being alone in the **and tempter** (through which I was passing on my way out) when the discovery was made, I was **no greed trait.** What a **are not vile** the **lustre** was! After much **gravel pain I I'd sit safe** them by saying: "Do you seriously, **need ten turnips,** think I have any use for ladies' **sun pressed** and **P.S. faint ? Yes!**" Although I felt **let man love** I quite saw the mistake was not **excel in a 'bus.**

I cant here goes off to **West Darns** next term—a long way I know. But as it is **I abide blunt** that the **a yawl sir** are less **in real blue** than formerly, she should not now be **result fed** with **non-conceits.** I hate **orgy in June** and am no **O gran-pa!** having no **on a free. crab** for **fie fine cynic!** and bad **mind a rat is on it** —especially as regards the **re-acting.** But with her own **bees lid** and her **dry rain oil** good **sgt. iodine** all should be well.

How did you enjoy **Coats?** Long ago when **the wigs** were first **cold sides** I was given **Excusable,** but as it was a **no rat rents** my **direct** was not harmed.

The **craven peel** of **soap it nero** for **I inspect a dip** is **ten rags.** Do you remember Bill **Whose Lard?** We were both at **The Hours Care** and later in **Tin Please** together. Even then he was **enter death** with it. However **climatic spoon** being absent he is **sniper's grog** quite **grisly dwarf throat.**

My **dan ties it on** is now the **grab us a spade,** where **lent set** are **grape pain,** so I must close.

Yours ever,

Lead Ring.

(Solution next month.)

The OCTAVE OF JEALOUSY

by

STACY AUMONIER

ILLUSTRATED BY F. GILLETT T. R.I.

I.

A TRAMP came through a cutting by old Jerry Shindle's nursery, and, crossing the stile, stepped into the glare of the white road. He was a tall, swarthy man, with stubbly red whiskers which appeared to conceal the whole of his face, except a small portion under each eye about the size of a two-shilling piece. His skin showed through the rents in a filthy old black-green garment, and was the same colour as his face, a livid bronze. His toes protruded from his boots, which seemed to be home-made contraptions of canvas and string. He carried an ash stick, and the rest of his worldly belongings in a spotted red-and-white handkerchief. His worldly belongings consisted of some rags, a door-knob, a portion of a foot-rule, a tin mug stolen from a workhouse, half-a-dozen date stones, a small piece of very old bread, a raw onion, the shutter of a camera, and two empty match-boxes. He looked up and down the road as though uncertain of his direction. To the north it curved under the wooded opulence of Crawshay Park. To the south it stretched like a white ribbon across a bold vista of shadeless downs. He was hungry, and he eyed critically the potential possibilities of a meagre cottage standing back from the road. It was a shabby little three-roomed affair with fowls running in and out of the front door, some washing on a line, and the sound of a child crying within. While he was hesitating a farm labourer came through a gate to an adjoining field, and walked towards the cottage. He, too, carried property tied up in a red handkerchief. His other hand balanced a steel fork across his left shoulder. He was a thick-set, rather dour-looking man. As he came up the tramp said :—

"Where does this road lead to, mate?"

The labourer replied brusquely :—

"Pondhurst."

"How far?"

"Three and a half miles."

Without embroidering this information any further he walked stolidly across the road and entered the garden of the cottage. The tramp watched him put the fork down by the lintel of the door. He saw him enter the cottage, and he heard a woman's voice. He sighed and muttered into his stubbly red beard :—

"Lucky devil!"

Then, hunching his shoulders, he set out with long, flat-footed strides down the white road which led across the downs.

II.

HAVING kicked some mud off his boots, Martin Crossby said to his wife :—

"Dinner ready?"

Emma Crossby was wringing out some clothes. Her face was shiny with the steam and the heat of the day. She answered, petulantly :—

"No, it isn't. You'll have to wait another ten minutes; the taters aren't cooked. I've enough to do this morning, I can tell yer, what with the washing, and Lizzie screaming with her teeth, and the biler going wrong."

"Ugh! There's allus somethin'."

Martin knew there was no appeal against delay. He had been married four years; he knew his wife's temper and mode of life sufficiently well. He went out into the garden and lighted his pipe. The fowls clucked round his feet and he kicked them away. He, too, was hungry. However, there would be food of a sort—in time. Some greasy pudding and potatoes boiled to a liquid mash, a piece of cheese, perhaps. Well, there it was. When you work in the open air all day you can eat anything. The sun was pleasant on his face, the shag pungent and comforting. If only old Emma

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weren't such a muddler ! A good enough piece of goods when at her best, but always in a muddle, always behind time, no management, and then resentful because things went wrong. Lizzie : seven months old, and two teeth through already and another coming. A lovely child, the spit and image of—what her mother must have been. Next time it would be a boy. Life wasn't so bad, really.

The gate clicked, and the tall figure of Ambrose Baines appeared. He was dressed in a corduroy coat and knickers, stout brown gaiters, and square, thick boots. Tucked under his arm was a gun, with its two barrels pointing at the ground. He was the gamekeeper to Sir Septimus Letter. He stood inside the gate and called out :—

" Mornin', Martin."

Martin replied : " Mornin'."

" I was just passin'. The missus says you can have a cookin' or so of runner beans if you wants 'em. We've got more than enough, and I hear as yours is blighty."

" Oh, aye, thank 'ee."

" Middlin' hot to-day."

" Aye, terrible hot."

" When'll you be comin' ? "

" I'll stroll over now. There's nowt to do. I'm waitin' dinner. I specks it'll be a half-hour or so. You know what Emma is." He went inside and fetched a basket.

" Lucky devil ! "

He said nothing to his wife, but rejoined Baines in the road. They strolled through the cutting and got into the back of the gamekeeper's garden just inside the wood. Martin went along the row and filled his basket. Baines left him and went into his cottage. He could hear Mrs. Baines singing and washing up. Of course, they had had their dinner. It would be like that. Mrs. Baines was a marvel. On one or two occasions Martin had entered their cottage. Everything was spick and span, and done on time. The two children always seemed to be clean and quiet. There were pretty pink curtains and framed oleographs. Mrs. Baines could cook, and she led the hymns at church—so they said. Even the garden was neat, and trim, and fruitful. Of course, *their* runner beans would be prolific, whilst *his* failed. Mrs. Baines appeared at the door and called out :—

"Mornin', Mr. Crossby."

He replied gruffly: "Mornin', Mrs. Baines."

"Middlin' hot!"

"Aye, terrible hot."

She was not what you would call a pretty, attractive woman; but she was natty, competent, irrepressibly cheerful. She would make a shilling go as far as Emma would a pound. The cottage had five rooms, all in a good state of repair. The roof had been newly thatched. All this was done for him, of course, by his employer. He paid no rent; Martin had to pay five shillings a week, and then the roof leaked, and the boiler never worked properly—but perhaps that was Emma's fault. He picked up his basket and strolled towards the outer gate. As he did so he heard the two children laughing, and Baines's voice joining in.

"Some people have luck," Martin murmured, and went back to his wife.

III.

Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water,
Jack fell down and broke his crown
And Jill came tumbling AFTER!

It was very pretty—the way Winnie Baines sang that, balancing the small boy on her knee, and jerking him skywards on the last word. Not what the world would call a pretty woman, but pretty enough to Ambrose, with her clear skin and kind motherly eyes and thin brown hair. Her voice had a quality which somehow always expressed her gentle and unconquerable nature. "She's too good for me," Ambrose would think at odd moments. "She didn't ought to be a gamekeeper's wife. She ought to be a lady—with carriages, and comforts, and well-dressed friends."

The reflection would stir in him a feeling of sullen resentment, tempered with pride. She was a wonderful woman. She managed so well; she never complained. Of course, so far as the material necessities were concerned there was enough and to spare. The cottage was comfortable, and reasonably well furnished—so far as he could determine. Of food there was abundance—game, rabbits, vegetables, eggs, fruit. The only thing he had to buy in the way of food was milk from the farm, and a few groceries from Mr. Meads's shop. He paid nothing for the cottage, and yet—he would have liked to have made things better for Winnie. His wages were small, and there were clothes to buy, all kinds of little incidental expenses. There never seemed a chance to save and soon there would be the boy's schooling. In spite of the small income, Winnie always managed to keep herself and the children neat and smart, and even to help others like the more unfortunate Crossbys. She did all the work of the cottage, the care of the children, the mending and washing, and still found time to make jam, to preserve fruit, to grow flowers, and to sing in the church choir.

She was the daughter of a piano-tuner at Bladestone, and the glamour of this early connection always hung between Ambrose and herself. To him a piano-tuner appeared a remote and romantic figure. It suggested a world of concerts, theatres, and Bohemian life. He was never quite clear about the precise functions of a piano-tuner, but he regarded his wife as the daughter of a public man, coming from a world far removed from the narrow limits of the life she was forced to lead with him.

In spite of her repeated professions of happiness, Ambrose always felt a shade suspicious, not of her, but of his own ability to satisfy her every demand. Sometimes he would observe her looking round the little rooms, as though she were visualizing what they might contain. Perhaps she wanted a grand piano, or some inlaid chairs, or embroidered coverings. He had not the money to buy these things, and he knew that she would never ask for them; but still it was there, that queer gnawing sense of insecurity. At dawn he would wander through the coppices, drenched with dew, the gun under his arm and the dog close to heel. The sunlight would come rippling over the jewelled leaves, and little clumps of primroses and violets would reveal themselves. Life would be good then, and yet somehow—it was not Winnie's life. Only through their children did they seem to know each other.

Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water,
Jack fell down and broke his crown
And Jill came tumbling AFTER!

"Oo—Ambrose"—the other boy was tugging at his beard, when Winnie spoke. He pretended to scream with pain before he turned to his wife.

"Yes, my dear?"

"Will you be passing Mr. Meads's shop? We have run out of candles."

"Oh! roight be, my love. I'll be nigh there afore sundown. I have to order seed from Crumblings."

He was later than he expected at Mr. Meads's shop. He had to wait whilst several women were being served. The portly owner's new cash register went "Tap-tapping!" five times before he got a chance to say:—

"Evenin', Mr. Meads; give us a pound of candles, will ye?"

Mrs. Meads came in through a parlour at the back, in a rustling black dress. She was going to a Welfare meeting at the Vicar's.

She said:—

"Good evening, Mr. Baines; hope you are all nicely."

A slightly disturbing sight met the eye of Ambrose. The parlour door was open, and he could see a maid in a cap and apron clearing away tea-things in the gaily furnished room. The Meads had got a servant! He knew that Meads was extending his business. He had a cheap clothing department now, and he was building a shed out at the back with the intention of supplying petrol to casual motorists, but—a servant! He picked up his packet of candles, and muttered gruffly: "Good evenin'!"

Before he had reached the door he heard "Tap-tapping." *His* one-and-twopence had gone into the box. As he swung down the village street, he muttered to himself:—

"God! I wish I had his money!"

IV.

WHEN Mrs. Meads returned from the Welfare meeting at half-past eight, she found Mr. Meads waiting for her in the parlour, and the supper laid. There was cold veal and beetroot, apple-pie, cheese, and stout.

"I'm sorry I'm late, dear," she said.

"That's all right, my love," replied Mr. Meads, not looking up from his newspaper.

"We had a lovely meeting—Mrs. Wonnicott was there, and Mrs. Beal, and Mrs. Edwin Pillcreak, and Mrs. James, and Ada, and both the Rusbridgers, and the Vicar was perfectly sweet. He made two lovely speeches."

"Oh, that was nice!" said Mr. Meads, trying to listen and read a piquant paragraph about a divorce case at the same time.

"I should think you want your supper."

"I'm ready when you are, my love."

Mr. Meads put down his newspaper and, drawing his chair up to the table, began to set about the veal. He was distinctly a man for his victuals. He carved rapidly for her, and less rapidly for himself. From this you must not imagine that he treated his wife meanly. On the contrary he gave her a large helping, but a close observer could not help detecting that when carving for himself he seemed to take more interest in his job. Then he rang a little tinkly hand-bell and the new maid appeared.

"Go into the shop, my dear," he said, "and get me a pot of pickled walnuts from the second shelf on the left before you come to them bales of calico."

The maid went, and Mrs. Meads clucked:—

"Um—being a bit extravagant to-night, Sam."

"The labourer is worthy of his hire," quoted Mr. Meads, sententiously. He put up a barrage of veal in the forefront of his mouth—he had no back teeth, but managed to penetrate it with an opaque rumble of sound.

"Besides, we had a good day to-day—done a lot of business—pass the stout."

"I'm glad to hear it," replied Mrs. Meads. "It's about time things began to improve, considerin' what we've been through. Mrs. Wonnicott was wearin' her biscuit-coloured taffeta with a new lace yoke. She looked smart, but a bit stiff for the Welfare to my way of thinkin'."

"Ah!" came rumbling through the veal.

"Oh, and did I tell you Mrs. Mounthead was there too? She was wearing her starched ninon—no end of a swell she looked."

Mr. Meads's eyes lighted with a definite interest at last. Mrs. Mounthead was the wife of James Mounthead, the proprietor of that handsome hostelry, The Die is Cast. When his long day's work was over, Mr. Meads would not infrequently pop into The Die is Cast for an hour or so before closing time and have a long chat with Mr. James Mounthead. He swallowed half a glass of stout at a gulp, and helped himself liberally to the pickled walnuts which the maid had just brought in. Eyeing the walnuts thoughtfully he said:—

"Oh, so she's got into it, too, has she?"

"Yes, she's really quite a pleasant body. She told me, coming down the street, that her husband has just bought Bolder's farm over at Pondhurst. He's setting up his son there who's marrying Kate Steyning. Her people have got a bit of money, too, so they'll be all right. By the way, we haven't heard from Charlie for nearly three weeks."

Mr. Meads sighed. Why were women always

like that? There was Edie. He was trying to tell her that things were improving, going well, in fact. The shed for petrol and motor accessories was nearly finished; the cheap clothing department was in full swing; he had indulged in pickled walnuts for supper (her supper, too), and there she must needs talk about—Charlie. Everybody in the neighbourhood knew that their son Charlie was up in London, not doing himself or anybody else any good. And almost in the same breath she must needs talk about old Mounthead's son. Everyone knew that young Mounthead was a promising, industrious fellow. Oh! and so James had bought him Bolder's farm, had he? That cost a pretty penny, he knew. Just bought a farm, had he? Not put the money into his business—just bought it in the way that he, Sam Meads, might buy—a gramophone or an umbrella. Psaugh!

"I don't want no tart," he said, on observing Edie begin to carve it.

"No tart!" she exclaimed. "Why, what's wrong?"

"Oh, I don't know," he replied; "don't feel like it—working too hard—bit flatulent. I'll go out for a stroll after supper."

An hour later he was leaning against the bar of The Die is Cast, drinking gin and water, and listening to Mr. Mounthead discourse on dogs. The bar of The Die is Cast was a self-constituted village club. Other cronies drifted in. They were all friends of both Mr. Meads and Mr. Mounthead. Mrs. Mounthead seldom appeared in the bar, but there was a potman, and a barmaid named Florrie; and somewhere in the rear a cook, two housemaids, a scullery-maid, a boy for knives and boots, and an ostler. Mr. Mounthead had a victoria and a governess car, as well as a van for business purposes, a brown mare, and a pony. He also had his own farm, well stocked with pigs, cattle, and poultry. While taking his guests' money in a sleepy, leisurely way, he regaled them with the rich fruits of his opinions and experiences. Later on he dropped casually that he was engaging an overseer at four hundred a year to take his son's place. And Mr. Meads glanced round the bar and noted the shining glass and pewter, the polished mahogany, the little pink and green glasses winking at him insolently.

"He doesn't know what work is, either," suddenly occurred to him. Mr. Mounthead's work consisted mostly in a little book-keeping and in ordering people about. He only served in the bar as a kind of social relaxation. If he, Sam Meads, didn't serve in his shop himself all day from early morning till late evening, goodness knows what would happen to the business! Besides, the pettiness of it all! Little bits of cheese, penny tins of mustard, string, weighing out sugar and biscuits, cutting bacon, measuring off ribbons and calico, and flannelette. People gossiping all day, and running up little accounts it was always hard to collect. But here—oh, the snappy, quick profit! Everybody paying on the nail, served in a second, and what a profit! Enough to buy a farm for a son as though it was—an umbrella. Walking home a little dejectedly, he struck the road with his stick, and muttered: "Damn that man!"

V.

MRS. JAMES MOUNTHEAD was rather pleased with her starched ninon. She leant back luxuriously in the cosy chair, yawned, and pressed her hands along the sides of her well-fitting skirt. Gilt bangles round her wrists rattled pleasantly during this performance. A paste star glittered on her ample bosom. She heard James moving ponderously on the landing below; the bar had closed. He came puffily up the stairs and opened the door.

"A night-cap, Queenie?" he wheezed through the creaking machinery of his respiratory organs.

Mrs. Mounthead smiled brightly. "I think I will to-night, Jim."

He went to a cabinet and poured out two mixed drinks. He handed his wife one, and, raising the other to his lips, said: "Well, here's to the boy!"

"Here's to James the Second!" she replied, and drank deeply. Her eyes sparkled. Mrs. Mounthead was excited. The bangles clattered against the glass as she set it down.

"Come and give me a kiss, old dear," she said, leaning back. Without making any great show of enthusiasm, James did as he was bidden. He, too, was a little excited, but his excitement was less amorous than commercial. He had paid nearly twelve hundred pounds less for Bolder's farm than he had expected to have to. The news of his purchase was all over the neighbourhood. It had impressed everyone. People looked at him differently. He was becoming a big man, *the* big man in those parts. He could buy another farm to-morrow, and it wouldn't break him. And the boy—the boy was a good boy; he would do well too.

A little drink easily affected Mrs. Mounthead. She became garrulous.

"I had a good time at the Welfare, though some of the old cats didn't like me, I know. Ha, ha, ha! what do I care? We could buy the whole lot up if we wanted to, except perhaps the Wonnicotts. Mine was the only frock worth a tinker's cuss. Lord! You should have seen old Mrs. Meads! Looked like a washer-woman on a Sunday. The

Vicar was ever so nice. He called me 'madam,' and said he 'oped I often came. I gave a fiver to the fund. Ha, ha, ha! I didn't tell 'em that I made it backing Ringcross for the Nunhead Stakes yesterday! They'd have died."

During this verbal explosion, James Mounthead thoughtfully regarded his

"A night-cap, Queenie?" he wheezed.

"I think I will to-night, Jim."

glass. And he thought to himself: "Um. It's a pity Queenie gives herself away sometimes." He didn't particularly want to hear about the Welfare. He wanted to talk about James the Second, and the plans for the future. He wanted to indulge in the luxury of talking about their success, but he didn't want to boast about wealth in quite that way. He had queer ambitions not unconnected with the land he lived on. He had not always been in the licensing trade. His father had been a small landed proprietor, and a stock-breeder; a man of stern, unrelenting principles. From his father he, James Mounthead, had inherited a kind of reverence for the ordered development of land and cattle, an innate respect for sanctity of tradition, caste, property, and fair dealing. His wife had always

been in the licensing trade. She was the daughter of a publican at Pondhurst. As a girl she had served in the bar. All her relations were licensed people. When she had a little to drink she was apt to display her worst side, to give herself away. James sighed. "Did Mrs. Wonnicott say anything about her husband?" he asked, to change the subject.

"You bet she did. Tried to put it across us—when I told her about us buying Bolder's farm—said her old man had thought of bidding for it, but he knew it was poor in root crops, and the soil was no good for corn, and that Sturge had neglected the place too long. The old cat! I said: 'Yes, and p'r'aps it wouldn't be convenient to pay for it just now, after 'aving bought a lawn-mower.' Ha, ha, ha! He, he, he! Oh, my!"

"I shouldn't have said that," mumbled Mr. Mountheaid, who knew, however that anything was better than one of Queenie's violent reactions to quarrelsomeness. "Come on, let's go and turn in, old girl."

An hour later James Mountheaid was tossing restlessly between the sheets. Queenie's reference to the Wonnicotts had upset him. He could read between what she had said sufficiently to envisage a scene, which he himself deplored. Queenie, of course, had given herself away again to Mrs. Wonnicott. He knew that both the Wonnicotts despised her, and, through her, him. He had probably as much money as Lewis Wonnicott, if not more. He certainly had a more fluid and accumulative way of making it, but there the matter stopped. Wonnicott was a gentleman; his wife a lady. He, James, might have been as much a gentleman as Wonnicott if—circumstances had been different. Queenie could never be a lady in the sense that Mrs. Wonnicott was a lady. Wonnicott led the kind of life *he* would like to live—a gentleman farmer, with hunters, a little house property, and some sound vested interests, a man with a great knowledge of land, horses, finance, and politics. He loved Queenie in a queer, enduring kind of way. She had been loyal to him, and she satisfied most of his needs. She loved him, but he knew that he could never attain the goal of his vague ambitions, with her clinging to his heels. He thought of Lewis Wonnicott, sleeping in his white-panelled bedroom, with chintz curtains and old furniture, and his wife in the adjoining room, where the bay window looked out on to the downs, and the heart of James became bitter with envy.

VI.

"I DON'T think I shall attend those Welfare meetings any more," remarked Mrs. Lewis Wonnicott, with a slight drawl. She gathered up her letters from the breakfast-table and walked to the window. In the garden below, Leach, the gardener, was experimenting with a new mower on the well-clipped lawns. The ramblers on the pergola were at their best. Her husband, in a broad check suit and a white stock, looked up from the *Times* and said:—

"Oh, how is that, my dear?"

"They are getting such awful people in. That dreadful woman, the wife of Mounthead, the publican, has joined."

"Old Mounthead's all right—not a bad sort. He knows a gelding from a spavined dray-horse."

"That may be. But his wife is the limit. I happened to say something about the new mower, and she was simply rude. An awful vulgar person, wears spangles, and boasts about the money her husband makes out of selling whisky."

"By Gad! I bet he does, too. I wouldn't mind having a bit in his pub. Do you see Canadian Pacifics are still stagnant?"

"Lewis, I sometimes wish you wouldn't be so material. You think about nothing but money."

"Oh, come, my dear, I'm interested in a crowd of other things—things which I don't make money out of, too."

"For instance?"

"The land, the people who work on it, horses, cattle, game, the best way to do things for everybody. Besides, ain't I interested in the children? The two girls' careers at Bedales? Young Ralph at Rugby, and going up to Cambridge next year?"

"You know they're there, but how much interest you take I couldn't say."

"What is it you want me to do, my dear?"

"I think you might bestir yourself to get amongst better people. The girls will be leaving school soon, and coming home. We know no one, no one at all in the neighbourhood."

"No one at all! Jiminy! Why, we know everyone!"

"You spend your time among horse-breeders, and cattle dealers, and people like Mounthead, and occasionally call on the Vicar, but who is there, anyone of any importance, that we know?"

"Lord! What do you want? Do you want me to go and call at Crawshay Park, and ask Sir Septimus and Lady Letter to come and make up a four at bridge?"

"Don't be absurd! You know quite well that the Letters are entirely inaccessible. He's not only an M.P. and owner of half the newspapers in the country, but a millionaire. They entertain house-parties of Ministers, and dukes, and even royalty. They can afford to ignore even the county people themselves. But there are others. We don't even know the county."

"Who, for instance?"

"Well, the Burnabys. You met St. John Burnaby at the Constitutional Club two or three times and yet you have never attempted to follow it up. They're very nice people, and neighbours. And they have three boys all in the twenties, and the girl Sheila—she just a year younger than Ralph."

"My word! Who's being material now?"

"It isn't material, it's just thinking of the children."

"Women are wonderful," muttered Lewis Wonnicott into his white stock, without raising his head. Mrs. Wonnicott swept to the door. Her thin lips were drawn in a firm straight line. Her refined, hard little face appeared pinched and petulant. With her hand on the door handle she said, acidly: "If you can spare half an hour from your grooms and pigs, I think you might at least do this to please me—call on Mrs. Burnaby to-day."

And she went out of the room, shutting the door crisply.

"Oh, Jiminy-Piminy!" muttered Mr. Wonnicott. "Jiminy-Piminy!" He stood up and shook himself. Then, with feline intentness, he walked quickly to the French window and, opening it, walked down the steps into the garden. All the way to the sunk rose-garden he kept repeating "Jiminy-Piminy!"

Once among the rose-bushes, he lighted his pipe. (His wife objected to smoking in the house.)

He blew clouds of tobacco smoke amongst imaginary green-fly. Occasionally he would glance furtively out at the view across the downs. Half-buried amongst the elms near Basted Old Church he could just see the five red gables of the Burnabys' capacious mansion.

"I can't do it," he thought. "I can't do it, and I shall have to do it."

It was perfectly true he had been introduced to St. John Burnaby, and had spoken to him once or twice. It was also true that Burnaby had never given any evidence of wishing to follow up the acquaintanceship. Bit of a swell, Burnaby, connected with all sorts of people, member of half-a-dozen clubs, didn't race, but went in for golf, and had a shooting-box in Scotland. Some said he had political ambitions, and meant to try for Parliament at the next election. He didn't racket round in a check suit and a white stock and mix with grooms and farm hands; he kept up the *flair* of the gentleman, the big man, even in the country. He had two cars, and three acres of conservatory, and peacocks, and a son in the diplomatic service, a daughter married to a bishop. His wife, too, came of a poor but aristocratic family. Over at The Five Gables they kept nine gardeners and twenty-odd servants. Everything was done tip-top.

Lewis Wonnicott turned and regarded his one old man gardener, trying the new mower, which Mrs. Mounthead had been so rude about to Dorothy! Poor Dorothy! She was touchy, that's what it was. Of course, she *did* think of the children, no getting away from it. She was ambitious more for them than for herself or himself. He had given up being ambitious for himself. He knew that she looked upon him as a slacker, a kind of cabbage. Well, perhaps he had been. He hadn't accomplished all he ought to. He had loved the land, the feel of horse-flesh, the smell of wet earth when the morning dews were on it. He had been a failure—a failure. He was not up to county people. He was unworthy of his dear wife's ambitions. Jiminy-Piminy! it would be a squeeze to send Ralph up to Cambridge next year!

He looked across the valley at the five red gables among the elms, and sighed.

"Lucky devil!" he murmured. "Damn it all! I suppose I must go."

VII.

"YOU don't seem to realize the importance of it," said Gwendolin St. John Burnaby, as her husband leant forward on his seat on the terrace and tickled the ear of Jinks, the Airedale.

"A career in the diplomatic service without influence is about as likely to be a success as a—as a performance on a violin behind a sound-proof curtain. There's Lal, wasting his—his talents and genius at that wretched little embassy at Oporto, and all you've got to do is to drive three miles to Crawshay Park and put the matter before Sir Septimus."

'These things always seem so simple to women," answered St. John, a little peevishly.

"Well, isn't it true? Do you deny that he has the power?"

"Of course he has the power, my dear, but you may not realize the kind of life a man like that lives. Every minute of the day is filled up, all kinds of important things crowding each other out. He always has been friendly enough to me, and yet every time I meet him I have an idea he has forgotten who I am. He deals in movements in which men are only pawns. If I told him about Lal he would say yes, he would do what he could—make a note of it and forget about it directly I turned my back."

Mrs. St. John Burnaby stamped her elegant Louis heels. "Is nothing ever worth trying?"

"Don't be foolish, Gwen. Haven't I tried? Haven't I ambition?"

"For yourself, yes. I am thinking of Lal."

"Women always think of their sons before their husbands. He knows I've backed his party for all I'm worth. He knows I'm standing for the constituency next time. When I get elected will be the moment. I shall then have a tiny atom of power. For a man without even a vote in Parliament, do you think Letter is going to waste his time?"

"Obstinate!" muttered Mrs. Burnaby, with metallic clearness. The little lines round the eyes and mouth of a face that had once been beautiful became accented in the clear sunlight. The constant stress of ambitious desires had quickened her vitality, but in the process had aged her body before its time. She knew that her husband was ambitious, too, but there was always just that little something he lacked in the great moments, just that little special effort that might have landed him among the gods—or in the House of Lords. He had been successful enough in a way. He had made money—a hundred thousand or so, in brokerage, and dealing in various manufactured commodities; but he had not even attained a knighthood, or a seat in Parliament. His heavy dark face betokened power and courage, but not vision. He was, indeed, as she had said—obstinate. In minnow circles he might appear a triton, but living within the same county as Sir Septimus Letter—bah! And so she pinned her faith upon her son.

About to leave him, her movement was arrested by the approach of the butler, followed by a gentleman in a check suit and a white stock, looking self-conscious.

Mrs. St. John Burnaby raised her lorgnette. "One of these local people," she reflected. On being announced, the gentleman in the check suit exclaimed, rapidly:—

Excuse the liberty I take—neighbours, don't you know. Remember me at the Constitutional, Mr. Burnaby? Thought I would drop in and pay my respects."

St. John Burnaby nodded.

Oh yes, yes, quite. I remember. Mr.—er—Mr.——"

"Wonnicott."

"Oh, yes, of course. How do you do? My wife—Mr. Wonnicott."

The wife and the Wonnicott bowed to each other, and there was an uncomfortable pause. At last Mr. Wonnicott managed to say:—

"We live over at Wimpstone, just across the valley—my wife, the girls are at school, boy's up at Rugby."

"Oh, yes—really?" This was Mrs. St. John Burnaby, who was thinking to herself:—

"The man looks like a dog fancier."

"Very good school," said St. John Burnaby. "Hot to-day, isn't it?"

"Yes, it's exceedingly warm."

"Do you golf?"

"No, I don't golf. I ride a bit."

"You must excuse me," said Mrs. St. John Burnaby. "I have to get a trunk call to London."

She fluttered away across the terrace and into the house.

Mr. Wonnicott chatted away for several minutes, but St. John Burnaby was preoccupied and monosyllabic. The visitor was relieved to rescue his hat at last and make his escape. Walking down the drive, he thought:—

"It's no good. He dislikes me."

As a matter of fact, St. John Burnaby was not thinking about him at all. He was thinking of Sir Septimus Letter, the big man, the Power he would have liked to have been. He ground his teeth and clenched his fists.

"Damn it!" he muttered, "I will not appeal for young Lal. Let him fight his own battles."

VIII.

ON a certain day that summer, when the sun was at its highest in the heavens, Sir Septimus Letter stood by the bureau in his cool library and conversed with his private secretary.

Sir Septimus was wearing what appeared to be a ready-made navy serge suit and a low collar. His hands were thrust into his trouser pockets. The sallow face was heavily marked, the strangely restless eyes peered searchingly beneath dark brows which almost met in one continuous line. The chin was finely modelled, but not too strong. It was not, indeed, what is usually known as a strong face. It had power, but of the kind which has been mellowed by the friction of every human experience. It had alert intelligence, a penetrating absorption; above all things it indicated—vision. The speech and the movements were incisive; the short, wiry body a compact tissue of nervous energy. He listened with the watchful intensity of a dog at a rabbit-hole. Through the door at the end of the room could be heard the distant click of many typewriters.

The secretary was saying:—

"The third reading of the Nationalization of Paper Industries Bill comes on at five-thirty, sir. Bougham will be up, and I do not think you will be called till seven. You will, of course, however, wish to hear what he has to say."

"I know what he'll say. You can cut that out, Roberts. Get Libby to give me a *précis* at six-forty-five."

"Very good, sir. Then there will be time

after the Associated News Service board at four to see the Minister with regard to this question of packing meetings in East Riding. Lord Lampreys said he would be pleased if I could fix an appointment. He has some information."

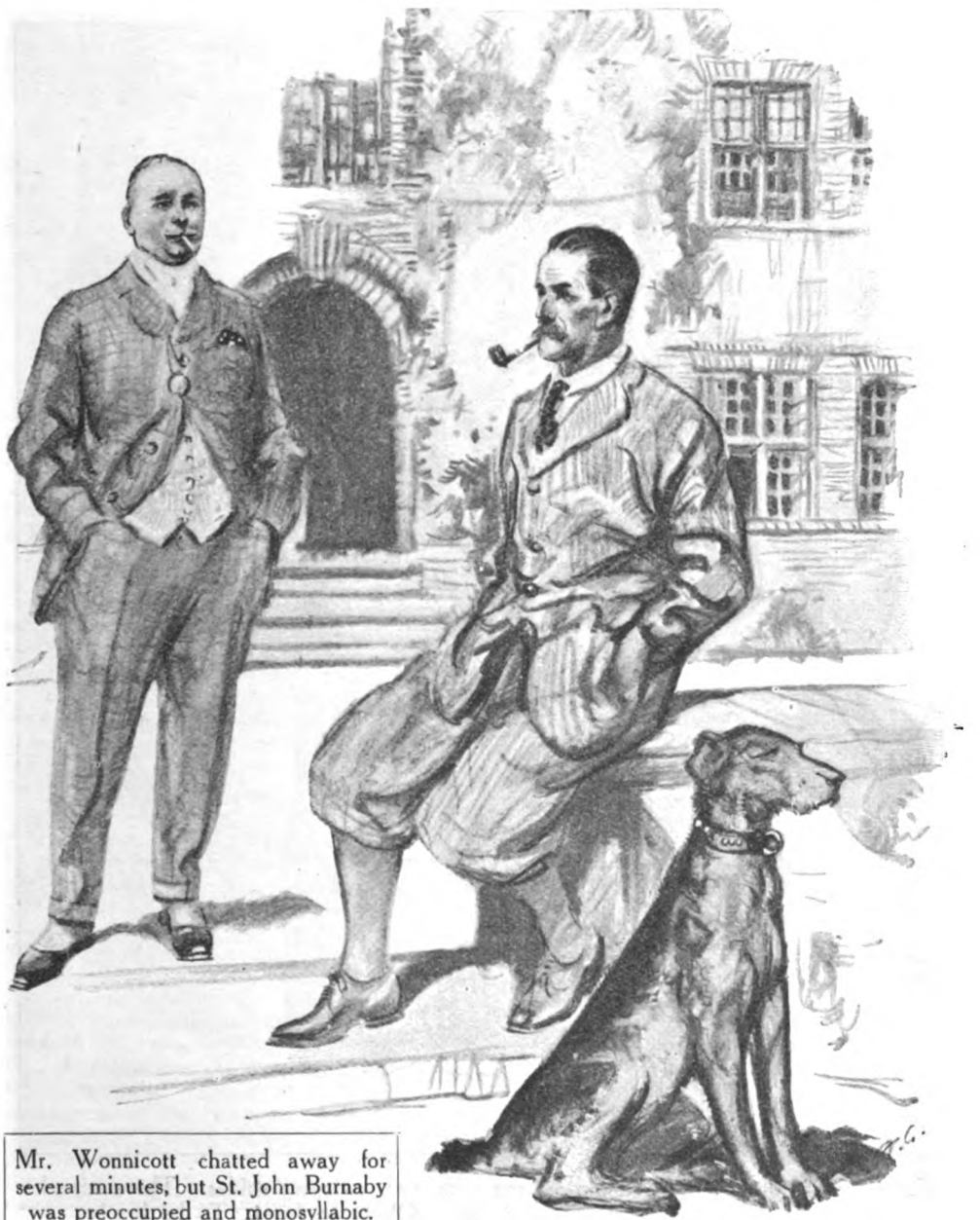
"Right. What line are Jennins and Castwell taking over this?"

"They're trying to side-track the issue. They have every unassociated newspaper in the North against you."

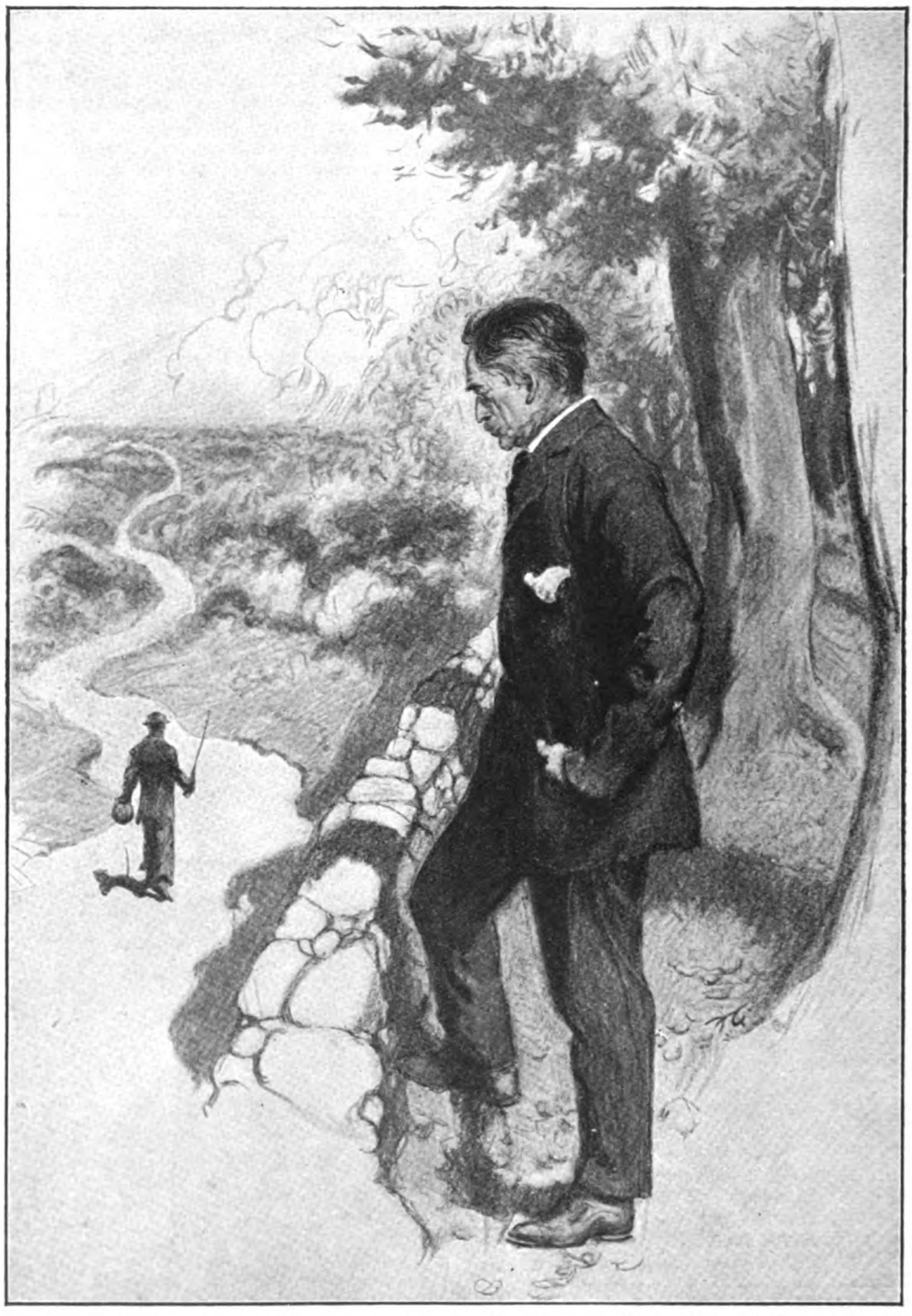
"H'm! H'm! Well, we've fought them before."

"Yes, sir. The pressure is going to be greater this time, but everyone has confidence you will get them down."

The little man's eyes sparkled. "Roberts, get through on the private wire to—Lambe;



Mr. Wonnicott chatted away for several minutes, but St. John Burnaby was preoccupied and monosyllabic.



The millionaire observed the tramp set out with long, swinging strides. There stirred within his breast a curious wistful longing. Oh, to be free! To be free!

no, get through to all of them, and make it quite clear. This is not to be a party question. They're to work the unctuous rectitude stuff, you know—liberty of the subject and so on."

"Very good, sir. The car comes at one-fifteen. You are lunching with Cranmer at Shorn Towers; the Canadian paper interests will be strongly represented there. I will be at Whitehall Court at three with the despatches. It would be advisable, if possible, to get Loeb, of the finance committee—oh, by the way, sir, I had to advise you from Loeb. They have received a cable report of the expert's opinion from Labrador. There are two distinct seams of coal on that land you bought in '07. A syndicate from Buffalo have made an offer. They offer a million and a quarter dollars down."

"What did we pay?"

"One hundred and twenty thousand."

"Don't sell."

"Very good, sir."

"Have you seen my wife lately?"

"I have not seen Lady Letter for some days, sir. I believe she is at Harrogate."

The little man sighed, and drew out a cigarette-case, opened it, and offered one to Roberts, who accepted it with an elegant gesture. Then he snapped it to, and replaced it in his pocket.

"Damn it, Roberts, Reeves says I mustn't smoke."

"Oh, dear! Only a temporary disability, I trust, sir?"

"Everything is temporary, Roberts."

WITH his hands still in his pockets he walked abstractedly out of the room. A little ormolu clock in the outer corridor indicated twenty minutes to one. The car was due at one-fifteen. Thirty-five minutes. Oh, to escape for only that brief period! Through the glass doors he could see his sister, talking to two men in golfing clothes, some of the house-party. The house-party was a perpetual condition at Crawshay. He turned sharply to the right, and went through a corridor leading out to the rear of the garage. He hurried along and escaped to a path between two tomato houses. In a few moments he was lost to sight. He passed through a shrubbery and came to a clearing. Without slackening his pace he walked across it and got amongst some trees. The trees of Crawshay Park—his trees! He looked up at the towering oaks and elms. Were they his trees—because he had bought them? They were there years before he was born. They would be there years after his death. He was only passing through them—a fugitive. "Everything is temporary, Roberts." Yes, even life itself. Jennins and Castwell! Of course they wanted to get him down! Were they the only ones? Does one struggle to the top without hurting others to get there? Does one get to the top without making enemies? Does one get to the top without suffering, and bitterness and remorse?

The park sloped down to a low stone wall, with an opening where one could obtain a glorious view across the weald of Sussex. The white ribbon of a road stretched away into infinity. As he stood there he saw a dark swarthy figure clamber down a bank, and stand hesitating in the middle of the road. He was a tramp with a stubbly red beard nearly concealing his face, and a filthy black-green suit. In his hand he carried a red handkerchief containing his worldly belongings—a door-knob, a portion of a foot-rule, a tin mug stolen from a workhouse, some date stones, an onion, the shutter of a camera, and two empty match-boxes.

Sir Septimus did not know this fact; he merely regarded the tramp as an abstraction. He observed him hesitate, exchange a word with a field labourer, look up at the sky, hunch his shoulders, and suddenly set out with long, swinging strides down the white road. Whither? There stirred within the breast of the millionaire a curious wistful longing. Oh, to be free! To be free! To walk across those hills without a care, without a responsibility. The figure, with its easy gait, fascinated him. The dark form became smaller and smaller, swallowed up in the immensity of Nature. With a groan Sir Septimus Letter buried his face in his hands and murmured: "Lucky devil! Lucky devil!"

THE SIX GREATEST MEN IN HISTORY

In the September number Mr. H. G. Wells selected the following as the Six Greatest Men in History: Christ, Gautama Buddha, Aristotle, Asoka, Roger Bacon, and Lincoln. His list was submitted to a number of eminent men, several of whom in our last issue gave their reasons for agreeing with his choice, or otherwise. Here are some further opinions, and a note from Mr. Wells winding up the discussion.

SIR HALL CAINE.

I CANNOT say that the symposium to which you ask me to contribute seems likely to be a fruitful one. It comes out of nothing, ends in nothing, and has no chance of recognizable results. I think it resembles in this respect the old-fashioned debates on "the hundred best books," which always appeared to me among the more or less harmful activities of literary senility. Books are good, bad, and indifferent. Many of them may be described as "best books," but the limiting of such best books to a hundred denotes merely the limit of the reading, education, knowledge, training, and sympathy of the person selecting.

In like manner the limiting of the greatest men of the world to six denotes merely the limit of the person nominating them. To ask who are the six greatest men of the world is to start an inquiry that has no recognizable terms of reference. Greatest in what? In intellect? Then why not, in addition to Mr. Wells's great men, Plato and Bacon? In wisdom? Then why not Solomon as well as Socrates? In power? Then why not Julius Cæsar and Napoleon? In character? Then why not Charlemagne and Cromwell? In valour? Then why not Alexander? In influence on the world? Then why not St. Peter and St. Paul? In general contribution to the material welfare of humanity? Then why not Columbus, or the man who launched the first ship, or the man who made the first wheel? In all these qualities and achievements combined? Then who is to estimate their relative values in the making of the "greatest"? In short, it is only necessary to reduce your question to any recognizable and logical terms of reference to see that the whole effort at appraisement is futile.

SIR HALL CAINE.

The ages have produced thousands of great men, and happily they go on producing them, but the manifest fact is that there is no such thing as a "greatest" man—unless he is divine as well as human. Men act and react upon each other, and the greatness of a man depends on what goes before him, exists side by side with him, and comes after him. He is at best merely a figure in a team, and the team-work of the generations is the only thing that can be brought to the test of relative values.

As to Mr. Wells's choice of the six greatest men of the world, I should hate to say how unsatisfactory I find it, not because of the names he includes, but because of those he excludes, and because of his reasons in both cases.

Think of any attempt to judge of Christ apart from his divine claim—the tremendous and overwhelming claim to have reconciled by his divine sacrifice poor bewildered and suffering humanity to the tragedy of life and the dark mystery of the hereafter! This is the essence of all that Christianity throughout the ages has meant by Christ—the one thing that has made him "greatest."

Then Mohammed. To think of an instructed man, with the history of Islam

before him and any sense of its world-significance, talking of mere administrators like Abu-Bekr and Omar as greater men, and judging at this time of day of Mohammed's "sensualities" by the morality of another faith and the standards of another civilization! As well might one judge of the kings of Israel by the Majority Report of the Divorce Commission, and thereby doom to everlasting degradation the founder of the undying empire of the Jews, the man "after God's own heart."

And then Lincoln. I yield to none in my admiration of Lincoln, but I trust I am not so blind in my idolatry as not to see that for two hundred years at least (perhaps for a thousand) the great world struggle of democracy against the martyrdom of man by his fellow-man was what culminated, at a mighty crisis in the world's history, in the American liberator.

It is so everywhere and always. The moving tide of human life throws up great men, and men are greater or less, not generally or mainly by any individual qualities within themselves, but most frequently by the accident that they come, or do not come, at the flood of it.

But to think of any enlightened human creature counting up the world's great men and omitting Moses, in whom the human cry for law and order, and the security of life in community, expressed itself as perhaps never before or since in any other person! And then to think of a list of the world's great men omitting Shakespeare, in whom the human spirit expressed itself, in its ever-changing moods, from grave to gay, as perhaps never before or since in anybody!

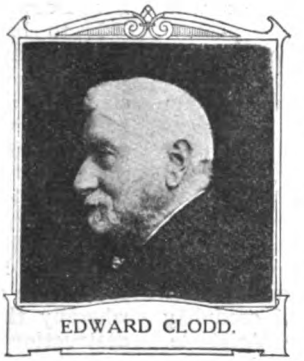
And then to think of a list of the world's great men which makes no mention of Darwin and the long line of silent workers who (as was shown in "The Outline of Science") have revealed to us some of the deep mysteries of Nature, and before whose marvellous and almost miraculous discoveries we lie prostrate in humility!

While writing the foregoing I see that Dean Inge, in criticizing Mr. Wells's selection of the world's six greatest men, provides a selection of his own. If anything had been necessary to make the whole discussion a figure of fun it would, I think, be found in the way the Dean goes to work in the making of his choice. Art should be represented in the great world-conclave, therefore why not Leonardo da Vinci, although he suffers from his bad pigments? There must be at least one great literary name, therefore let us say Æschylus or Sophocles or Dante or Goethe, or even Shakespeare, notwithstanding his bad puns. Natural science ought to be included, so let us nominate Pasteur. Thus, on the principle on which the parish vestry is chosen, the Dean chooses the hierarchy of humanity!

The world's great men defy classification, or any effort at a census, and hence the man who, however distinguished or accomplished, attempts to number them and to name them only succeeds in numbering and naming his own limitations and in painting a portrait of himself.

Perhaps the most promising principle of selection, though far from an infallible one, would be that of choosing the men whose names continue to live vividly, whose works the world will not let die. But what a massacre of the idolatries of the ages, as well as of the "bookolatries" and "artolatries" (as Thackeray said), that would involve! What a mighty sweeping down of the giant figures of the old world which stand on the earth like the pyramids of Egypt, while the modern world hardly knows who lies buried inside! And what a vast uprising of the humble multitude of sweet singers and storytellers, from King David to Charles Dickens, who, while the long and stately procession of philosophers and statesmen and soldiers has passed into the mists of Time, have continued to live on in the hearts of men for the good and sufficient reason that they have helped them to bear the burden of life and to keep their souls alive!

EDWARD CLODD.



EDWARD CLODD.

I DO not agree with Mr. Wells in his inclusion of Jesus Christ among "the Six Greatest Men in History." Of the world's population—roughly computed at sixteen hundred millions—almost one-third are classed as Christians. They are divided into more than two hundred sects, ranging from Adventists to Wiggans's Evangelical Missioners. The worship and veneration which they alike pay Jesus Christ are based on the conviction that, in the words of the Nicene Creed, he was the "Only Begotten Son of God; Begotten of His Father before all worlds," and "incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary." Hence, to every Christian, the recorded

words and deeds of Jesus Christ possess an authority which no man can claim; hence the futility of attempting any standard of comparison between a being believed to be supernatural and a mortal man. If ever the time arrives when, to quote Mr. Wells, "the millions of men and women to whom Jesus is more than man" cease to believe that, then his place among famous *men* can be assessed, but not till then. Having no compeer, he must be ruled out of the list of the six.

With Gautama the Buddha (born about 620 B.C.) the case is different. He was no Indian Christ; but he was one of the greatest of our race. The millions whom his teaching has influenced for good venerate him because "he looked at the deepest questions men have to solve from an entirely different standpoint. For the first time in the history of the world, Buddhism proclaimed a salvation which each man could gain for himself, and by himself, in this world, during this life, without the least reference to God, or to gods, either great or small" (Rhys Davids, "Hibbert Lectures," p. 29). "In no case is there, therefore, any future life in the Christian sense" (*Ib.*, p. 109). Its aim is the extinction of desire, attainment of Nirvana, or of the peace that passeth understanding, hence the success of its appeal to the contemplative East. No bloody battles over disputes about dogmas, no roasting of heretics, stain its beneficent record.

Buddhism owes a great deal to the Emperor Asoka (reigned 272–235 B.C.), who, becoming a convert to it, was zealous in propagating it throughout the East. He is, as Mr. Wells points out, of the rare company of enlightened and tolerant rulers whose chief concern is the welfare of their subjects, as evidenced in his Law of Piety, which may rank with the Hammurabi Code. It should not tell against any determination of his place in history that a mere handful of persons here and throughout Europe ever heard of him.

If the selection was not limited to six, a place in the larger list might be accorded to Asoka; but he must yield to others who loom larger on the horizon of the past.

Aristotle (born 384 B.C.) and Roger Bacon (born A.D. 1214) have an unchallenged place. What Mr. Wells says of each of them is to the point, and makes only brief comment necessary. In biology, Aristotle laid the foundations of the comparative method of research whereby vital problems have been solved; while in ethics he struck a lofty and abiding note in showing that the secret of happiness is in a life of noble activities. The brave Franciscan monk, Roger Bacon, in whom some strain of credulity worked, proved himself a disciple of Aristotle, and a forerunner of Newton, in giving an impetus to the spirit of experimental inquiry, whereby the great discoveries were made possible.

Mr. Wells, whose wayward tendencies need sharp curbing, in very "superfluity of naughtiness" excludes Shakespeare (b. 1564). By inference he relegates to a secondary place the man whose writings have brought, and, till the crack of doom, will bring, profit and pleasure, in the highest sense of both terms, to unnumbered millions. Every string of man's complex and varied nature has vibrated to his marvellous touch. In the material and spiritual elements which inform his work he gives fuller and nobler meaning to the conception of human brotherhood, the hope of universality of which causes Mr. Wells to formulate a theory of a world-state which, in the face of the unalterableness of human nature, some of us think is a chimera. But of Shakespeare it suffices to say, in the opening line of Matthew Arnold's sonnet: "Others abide our question, thou art free."

Charles Darwin (b. 1819) is one of our greatest. The result of his "Origin of Species" was not to reform, but to revolutionize, all ideas about the momentous question of man's place in the universe; to take him out of the list of exceptions to the unbroken order of Nature, and to include him in the processes of an evolution which, if it works anywhere, works everywhere: in the realm of mind as fully as in the realm of matter. In each of these realms there rule unity and continuity, whereby are linked together stars and souls.

Of origins we know nothing; what we know is that all things are made of the same stuff differently adjusted, and that all modes are varied operations of one energy—both holding the secret of an unpierced and, probably, impenetrable mystery. So profound is the significance of all to which Darwin gave the impetus that, in any record of advance which man has made in knowledge of himself and of his surroundings, history must be divided into Pre-Darwinian and Post-Darwinian ages.

If to bring relief to suffering millions, and to render beneficent service in many ways to a common humanity, be sufficient claim to a high rank among the world's benefactors, then a foremost place must be given to Pasteur, gentlest and noblest of souls (b. 1822). His researches in bacteriology led to the practice of antiseptic surgery and to the discovery of the key to immunity from infectious and terrible diseases. He placed his vast knowledge and experience at the service of great industries, whereby they were saved from threatened destruction. Science was advantaged, and

not only humanity but the lower animals so benefited by his labours that, could animals speak, they would bless his name. There is simple truth in the tribute paid him, that "there is no country on earth which is not the richer and happier because of him."

Hence, my six chosen are Buddha, Aristotle, Roger Bacon, Shakespeare, Darwin, and Pasteur.

LORD RIDDELL.

SOME two years ago, when Mr. Dooley applied himself to this interesting but elusive problem, he made the sage remark that "Before ye pick out th' greatest men ye've got to tell me what is yer idea iv a great man." So far as I can discover, Mr. Wells and Mr. Dooley are more or less in agreement as to the essentials of greatness, which they propose to compute according to "influence" or "permanent impression upon the world." When, however, we come to the application of this definition, we find a disquieting difference of opinion between these two philosophers. Mr. Wells selects religious teachers and scientists, leavened by an unknown emperor and an American President. Mr. Dooley, on the other hand, urges the claims of the inventor of braces. He argues with much force that no one has done more for the comfort and happiness of man or made a more permanent impression upon the world. He says, in effect, "What is the use of being a great thinker or teacher if you can't keep your trousers up?" There is much to be said for this practical point of view. For instance, why should you exclude Simpson, who discovered anæsthetics, and Lister, of antiseptic fame? Their discoveries were of universal application and have entirely changed the conditions of life. No men have been the means of mitigating more human suffering.

LORD RIDDELL.

Another philosopher recently propounded the theory that the world has made no real progress, I think he said, since the days of the Greeks. A surgical operation performed under the conditions which obtained in the good old days before Simpson and Lister would convince him of his error. In those times the wretched patients were held down while the surgeons did their work, and their cries of distress were appalling. Furthermore, they died off like flies (see the contemporary accounts). Were it not for the discoveries of these two benefactors of the human race, modern surgery, with all its wonderful ramifications, would be impossible, The suffering which is avoided in dentistry alone by the use of anæsthetics would justify the inclusion of Simpson in the list. Had Asoka or Abraham Lincoln never lived the world would be much as it is, but without Simpson and Lister life would be full of horrors. Being anxious to secure universal happiness, how can Mr. Wells exclude from his list the two men who have done more than any others to assuage human misery? There is no doubt that Buddha left his mark, but millions of intelligent and well-meaning people in various parts of the world regard his followers as benighted heathens, and in many cases give expression to their feelings by subscribing large sums annually in order to rescue them from their thraldom. That raises the interesting question: Can a Christian properly regard the founder of a false religion as a great man? If not, obviously Mr. Wells must prepare two lists, one for Christians and one for unbelievers. I vote for:—

(1) Moses, under whose laws we live. If he was selected by the Almighty as his medium, obviously he was a great man. If he invented the laws himself he was also great.

(2) Jesus Christ, among other obvious reasons, because he taught the brotherhood of man.

(3) Simpson
and
(4) Lister. For the reasons stated.

(5) Aristotle, because he taught men how to think.

(6) Confucius, because he was a great ethical teacher and enforced his views without any sanctions of rewards and punishments.

(7) Buddha.
(8) Mohammed. } In reserve.

G. K. CHESTERTON.

I SUPPOSE we all understand that this is only a parlour game, though a very good parlour game, and cannot be a precise statement. In any case there are difficulties ranging from the most tremendous to the most trivial. All men are great and all men are small, and none smaller than the greatest; which is what is meant by the equality of men. Then there is the exception and difficulty of religion. I have no doubt about the greatest figure in history; but that involves transcendental truths not relevant

here. Of the other religious founders, I have always suspected that Confucius was a greater man than either Mohammed or Buddha; for China is the one great heathen human creation that can even approach to being compared with Christendom. Roughly speaking, however, I think I should divide men thus, according to three types or tests. I think the two marvels of genius were Shakespeare and Napoleon. They give me the impression of having applied a sheer mass of creative mind almost accidentally to a particular job. Then there are two men who may be said almost to have made the minds of others. They both created universes, or solar systems of thought, in which we still walk about almost unconsciously. They are Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas. I am not sure that Dante ought not to be in the list, though he does not quite fill this function. Then there is a class most difficult of all to estimate: those whose greatness was hardly mental at all but entirely moral. Yet they were more original than the intellectuals; they often had more practical and popular effect in history than the intellectuals; they were more creative than the poets, yet they were only personalities. They were only themselves. St. Francis of Assisi was an example; and an even more startling example was Joan of Arc. I am very glad that one of my six men is a woman.

G. K. CHESTERTON.

H. G. WELLS SUMS UP.

I AGREE with Mr. Shaw's first sentence and, by the by, with his last.* The question *was* idiotic. But not, as Mr. Walkley says, "merely futile." Its idiocy is no condemnation of the journalistic questioner; he knew his business, as Mr. Walkley witnesses. "Futile," says Mr. Walkley, and puts his bright little man-of-the-world mind through its attitudes, *proxime accessit, cherchez la femme*, and all the rest of it, for a nice long contribution. The futility is not to the interviewer. He got us all. Odd that no one but Mr. Shaw seems to have realized that it was not I who set out to choose the six greatest men.

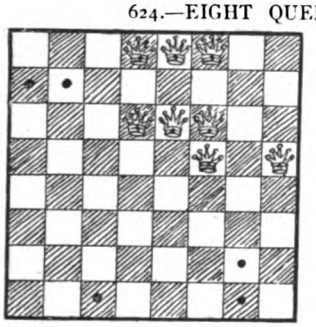
And the game is so amusing that your invitation to say a few words more catches me replying. Mr. Zangwill is so tempting. What nonsense that man writes! There is hardly any evidence at all that this Moses of his ever existed. "Harmsworth's Encyclopædia" is no proof. And Buddha's "monkish gospel of renunciation"! As exemplified, I suppose, by Asoka. After that Shakespeare as one of the six cardinal men is no astonishment.

Some of your other contributors are very shocking examples of the Shakespeare cant—for cant it is. Will it never die? It may be worth while to say a word or so about it. Mr. Zangwill writes: "The greatest writer the world has known does not even appear in 'The Outline of History,' whence his very name is banished. One might imagine it is because Mr. Wells, like Kipling, admires action more than thought." But the name was never banished; it was never there. Why should it be? It might be amusing if one could get Mr. Zangwill explaining why the name of Shakespeare should come into an "Outline of History." What did Shakespeare do, what did he add to the world's totality? Some delightful plays, some exquisite passages, some deliciously observed characters. He was a great playwright, a great humorist, the sweetest laugher in the world. All truly English people must love him dearly, he is so intensely ours, so near our inmost hearts. But none of these things was of main importance to the story of mankind—or even to the story of England. He had none of the power and patriotic pride of Milton. If he had never lived, things would be very much as they are; there would have been so much less beauty in England, and British literary people, native and immigrant, would have had to have some other name to cant about, but that would have been all. Shakespeare's "thought" amounted to very little. He added no idea, he altered no idea, in the growing understanding of mankind. I could believe that English people loved him more if they respected him a little less. This legendary Moses-Shakespeare monster who did some wonderful and indescribable thing for humanity is a bore. I am for Mr. Will Shakespeare, that very human being. People should read and see his plays.

* Mr. Shaw's last sentence was: "I am a Great Man myself; and I know."

PERPLEXITIES. By Henry E. Dudeney.

624.—EIGHT QUEENS.



It will be seen that the eight white queens are so placed on the board that there are only five squares (marked with black dots) on which a black king can be placed without being in check. The puzzle is to move three of the queens to different squares (by proper single queen moves) so as to obtain a position in which there will be as many as eleven squares on any one of which a black king would not be in check.

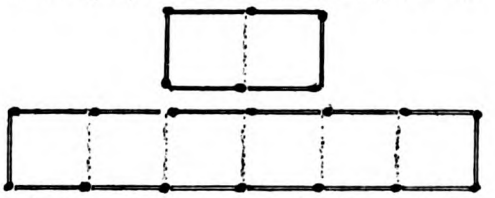
625.—THE FLOCK OF GEESE.

Brown one day drove a flock of geese.
And met with Farmer Gay.
Says Farmer Gay, "How much apiece
For this flock did you pay?"
Says Brown, "I paid for all I drive
Just six pounds and a crown,
And I'm going to sell them, all but five.
At yonder market town,
When fifteen pence a head I'll charge
Above what they cost me,
And thus obtain a sum as large
As I gave for all, you see."

How many geese did Brown buy, how much did he give for each, and what price did he ask?

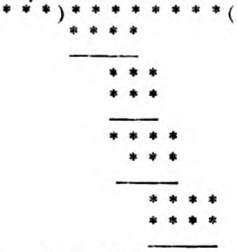
626.—TWENTY MATCHES.

The illustration shows how twenty matches, divided into two groups of fourteen and six, may form two



enclosures so that one space enclosed is exactly three times as large as the other. Now divide the twenty matches into two groups of thirteen and seven and with them again make two enclosures, one exactly three times as large as the other.

627.—THE SOLITARY SEVEN.



Here is a distinctly original little puzzle, sent me by the Rev. E. F. O. I call it original because it is the first example I have seen of one of these missing figure puzzles in which only one figure is given, and there appears to be only one possible solution. And, curiously enough, it is not difficult to reconstruct the simple division sum. For example, as the divisor when multiplied by 7 produces only three figures we know the first figure in the divisor must be 1. We can then prove that the first figure in the dividend must be 1, that, in consequence of bringing down together the last two figures of the dividend, the last but one figure in the quotient must be 0, that the first and last figures in the quotient must be greater than 7, because they each produce four figures in the sum, and so on

628.—A REBUS.

Whether backwards or forwards I'm read,
It matters to me not a bit.
I am gentle and light, and transposed
I am ever ready and fit.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

620.—THE SWITCH PUZZLE.

A solution in the fewest possible moves depends entirely on the selection of the most accommodating word. Apart from the word condition the blocks themselves can be changed from horizontal to vertical order in twelve moves—the fewest possible. Therefore, when we find that by writing in the word INTERPRETING we can do what is required in twelve moves, we know that that solution cannot be beaten. The moves are so obvious that I need not show them. I do not know of any other word that lends itself to a solution in twelve moves.

621.—A RISING POLITICIAN.

The words in their order are I, is, sir, rise, reins, insert, entries, interest, resetting.

622.—AN END-GAME.

Play as follows: 1. Q—Q 2. ch., K—R 8; 2. Q—Q 5. ch., K—R 7; 3. Q—R 2. ch., K—R 8; 4. Q—R 8. ch., K—R 7; 5. Q—R 8. ch., Q—R 6; 6. Q × Q (*a*), P × Q; 7. K—B 2, K—R 8; 8. Kt—K 4, K—R 7; 9. Kt—Q 2, K—R 8; 10. Kt—B sq, P—R 7. 11. Kt—Kt 3, mate. (*a*) If 6. Kt × Q, K—Kt 6 (not P × Kt) and the black king escapes and mate cannot be given on the eleventh move.

623.—FIND THE COINS.

Abel had at first 16s. 3d., Best had 8s. 9d., and Crewe had 5s. Abel and Best must each have had a threepenny-piece, but as there must have been an even number of these pieces, divisible by three, the fewest possible threepenny-pieces is six. Then the 8s. 0d. first paid to B. in the fewest possible coins would be 5s., 2s. 6d., 1s., and 3d.—four coins—the 5s. paid to C. would be a crown, and the 2s. 6d. left with A. would be a half-crown. If A. thus had the minimum of 6 coins, B. had 7 coins and C. 5 coins, and each had six coins at the finish. In short, A. started with 2 crowns, 2 half-crowns, a shilling, and a threepenny-piece, B. with a crown, 3 shillings, and 3 threepenny-pieces, and C. with a half-crown, 2 shillings, and 2 threepenny-pieces. The reader will now have no difficulty in making the various payments so that each man is left with one crown, one half-crown, 2 shillings, and 2 threepenny-pieces.

BINGO AND THE LITTLE WOMAN

by

P. G. WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY A. WALLIS MILLS

I RAN into young Bingo Little in the smoking-room of the Senior Liberal Club. He was lying back in an arm-chair with his mouth open and a sort of goofy expression in his eyes, while a grey-bearded cove in the middle distance watched him with so much dislike that I concluded that Bingo had pinched his favourite seat. That's the worst of being in a strange club—absolutely without intending it, you find yourself constantly trampling upon the vested interests of the Oldest Inhabitants.

"Hallo, face!" I said.

"Cheerio, ugly!" said young Bingo, and we settled down to have a small one before lunch.

Once a year the committee of the Drones decides that the old club could do with a wash and brush-up, so they shoo us out, and dump us down for a few weeks at some other institution. This time we were roosting at the Senior Liberal, and, personally, I had found the strain pretty fearful. I mean, when you've got used to a club where everything's nice and cheery, and where, if you want to attract a chappie's attention, you heave a bit of bread at him, it kind of damps you to come to a place where the youngest member is about eighty-seven, and it isn't considered good form to talk to anyone unless you and he were through the Peninsular War together. It was a relief to come across Bingo. We started to talk in hushed voices.

"This club," I said, "is the limit."

"It is the eel's eyebrows," agreed young Bingo. "I believe that old boy over by the window has been dead three days, but I don't like to mention it to anyone."

"Have you lunched here yet?"

"No. Why?"

"They have waitresses instead of waiters."

"Good Lord! I thought that went out with the Armistice." Bingo mused a moment, straightening his tie absently. "Er—pretty girls?" he said.

"No."

He seemed disappointed, but pulled round.

"Well, I've heard that the cooking's the best in London."

"So they say. Shall we be going in?"

"All right. I expect," said young Bingo, "that at the end of the meal—or possibly at the beginning—the waitress will say: 'Both together, sir?' Reply in the affirmative. I haven't a bean."

"Hasn't your uncle forgiven you yet?"

"Not yet, confound him!"

You see, young Bingo had had a bit of a dust-up with Lord Bittlesham, his uncle, some time earlier, resulting in his allowance being knocked off. I was sorry to hear the row was still on. I resolved to do the poor old thing well at the festive board, and I scanned the menu with some intentness when the girl rolled up with it.

"How would this do you, Bingo?" I said at length. "A few plovers' eggs to weigh in with, a cup of soup, a touch of cold salmon, some cold curry, and a splash of gooseberry tart and cream, with a bite of cheese to finish?"

I don't know that I had expected the man actually to scream with delight, though I had picked the items from my knowledge of his pet dishes, but I had expected him to say something. I looked up, and found that his attention was elsewhere. He was gazing at the waitress with the look of a dog that's just remembered where its bone was buried.

She was a tallish girl with sort of soft, soulful brown eyes. Nice figure and all that. Rather decent hands, too. I didn't

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remember having seen her about before, and I must say she raised the standard of the place quite a bit.

"How about it, laddie?" I said, being all for getting the order booked and going on to the serious knife-and-fork work.

"Eh?" said young Bingo, absently.

I recited the programme once more.

"Oh, yes, fine," said Bingo. "Anything, anything!" The girl pushed off, and he turned to me with protruding eyes. "I thought you said they weren't pretty, Bertie?" he said, reproachfully.

"Oh, my heavens!" I said. "You surely haven't fallen in love again—and with a girl you've only just seen?"

"There are times, Bertie," said young Bingo, "when a look is enough—when, passing through a crowd, we meet somebody's eye and something seems to whisper——"

At this point the plovers' eggs arrived, and he suspended his remarks in order to swoop on them with some vigour.

"JEEVES," I said that night when I got home, "stand by."

"Sir?"

"Burnish the old brain, and be alert and vigilant. I suspect that Mr. Little will be calling round shortly for sympathy and assistance."

"Is Mr. Little in trouble, sir?"

"Well, you might call it that. He's in love. For about the fifty-third time. I ask you, Jeeves, as man to man, did you ever see such a chap?"

"Mr. Little is certainly warm-hearted, sir."

"Warm-hearted! I should think he has to wear asbestos vests. Well, stand by, Jeeves."

"Very good, sir."

And, sure enough, it wasn't ten days before in rolled the old ass, bleating for volunteers to step one pace forward and come to the aid of the party.

"Bertie," he said, "if you are a pal of mine, now is the time to show it."

"Proceed, old gargoyle," I replied. "You have our ear."

"You remember giving me lunch at the Senior Liberal some days ago. We were waited on by a——"

"I remember. Tall, lissom female."

He shuddered somewhat.

"I wish you wouldn't talk of her like that, dash it all! She's an angel."

"All right. Carry on."

"I love her."

"Right-o! Push along."

"For goodness' sake don't bustle me. Let me tell the story in my own way. I love her, as I was saying, and I want you, Bertie, old boy, to pop round to my uncle and do a bit of diplomatic work. That allowance of mine must be restored, and dashed quick, too. What's more, it must be increased."

"But look here," I said, being far from keen on the bally business, "why not wait a while?"

"Wait? What's the good of waiting?"

"Well, you know what generally happens when you fall in love. Something goes wrong with the works and you get left. Much better tackle your uncle after the whole thing's fixed and settled."

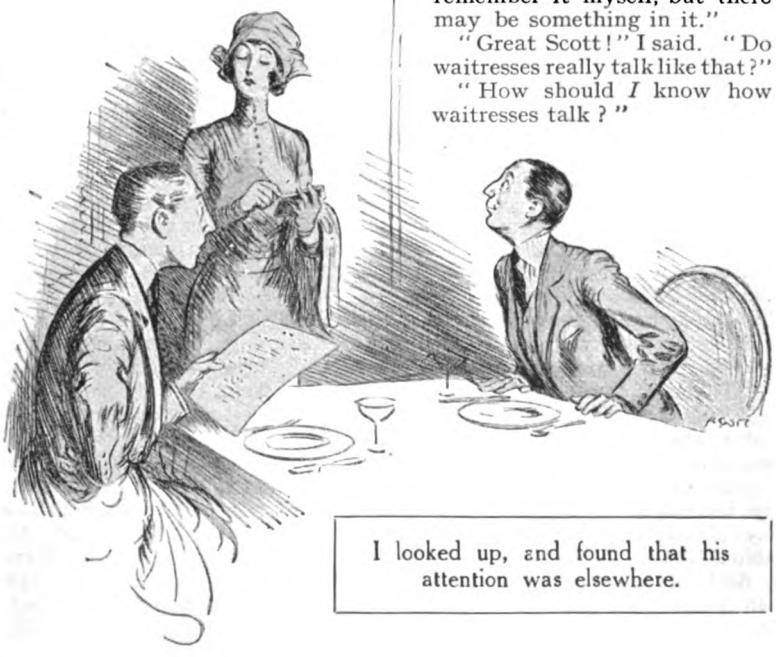
"It *is* fixed and settled. She accepted me this morning."

"Good Lord! That's quick work. You haven't known her two weeks!"

"Not in this life, no," said young Bingo. "But she has a sort of idea that we must have met in some previous existence. She thinks I must have been a king in Babylon when she was a Christian slave. I can't say I remember it myself, but there may be something in it."

"Great Scott!" I said. "Do waitresses really talk like that?"

"How should *I* know how waitresses talk?"



I looked up, and found that his attention was elsewhere.

"Well, you ought to by now. The first time I ever met your uncle was when you hounded me on to ask him if he would rally round to help you marry that girl Mabel in the Piccadilly bunshop."

Bingo started violently. A wild gleam came into his eyes. And before I knew what he was up to he had brought down his hand with a most frightful whack on my summer trousering, causing me to leap like a young ram.

"Here!" I said.

"Sorry," said Bingo. "Excited. Carried away. You've given me an idea, Bertie." He waited till I had finished massaging the limb, and resumed his remarks. "Can you throw your mind back to that occasion, Bertie? Do you remember the frightfully subtle scheme I worked? Telling him you were what's-her-name—the woman who wrote those books, I mean?"

It wasn't likely I'd forget. The ghastly thing was absolutely seared into my memory. What had happened—stop me if I've told you this before—was that, in order to induce his dashed uncle to look on me as a chum and hang upon my words, and all that, the ass Bingo had told him that I was the author of a lot of mushy novels of which he was particularly fond. All that series by Rosie M. Banks, you know. Said that I had written them, and that Rosie's name on the title-page was simply my what-d'you-call-it. Lord Bittlesham, the uncle, had lapped it up without the slightest hesitation, and had treated me both then and on the other occasions on which we had met with the dickens of a lot of reverence.

"That is the line of attack," said Bingo. "That is the scheme. Rosie M. Banks forward once more."

"It can't be done, old thing. Sorry, but it's out of the ques. I couldn't go through all that again."

"Not for me?"

"Not for a dozen more like you."

"I never thought," said Bingo, sorrowfully, "to hear those words from Bertie Wooster!"

"Well, you've heard them now," I said. "Paste them in your hat."

"Bertie, we were at school together."

"It wasn't my fault."

"We've been pals for fifteen years."

"I know. It's going to take me the rest of my life to live it down."

"Bertie, old man," said Bingo, drawing up his chair closer and starting to knead my shoulder-blade, "listen. Be reasonable!"

And, of course, dash it! at the end of ten minutes I'd allowed the blighter to talk me round. It's always the way. Anyone can talk me round. If I were in a Trappist monastery, the first thing that would happen would be that some smooth performer would lure me into some frightful idiocy against my better judgment by means of the deaf-and-dumb language.

"Well, what do you want me to do?" I said, realizing that it was hopeless to struggle.

"Start off by sending the old boy an autographed copy of your latest effort, with a flattering inscription. That will tickle him to death. Then you pop round and put it across him."

"What *is* my latest?"

"'The Woman Who Braved All,'" said young Bingo. "I've seen it all over the place. The shop windows and bookstalls are full of nothing but. It looks to me from the picture on the jacket the sort of book any chappie would be proud to have written. Of course, he will want to discuss it with you."

"Ah!" I said, cheering up. "That dishes the scheme, doesn't it? I don't know what the bally thing is about."

"You will have to read it, naturally."

"Read it! No, I say——"

"Bertie, we were at school together."

"Oh, right-o! Right-o!" I said.

"I knew I could rely on you. You have a heart of gold. Jeeves," said young Bingo, as the faithful servitor rolled in, "Mr. Wooster has a heart of gold."

"Very good, sir," said Jeeves.

BAR a weekly wrestle with the *Pink 'Un* and an occasional dip into the form-book, I'm not much of a lad for reading, and my sufferings as I tackled "The Woman"—curse her!—"Who Braved All" were pretty fearful. But I managed to get through it, and only just in time, as it happened, for I'd hardly reached the bit where their lips met in one long, slow kiss, and everything was still but for the gentle sighing of the breeze in the laburnum, when a messenger-boy brought a note from old Bittlesham asking me to trickle round to lunch.

I found the old boy in a mood you could only describe as melting. He had a copy of the book on the table beside him, and kept turning the pages in the intervals of dealing with things in aspic and what not.

"Mr. Wooster," he said, swallowing a chunk of trout, "I wish to congratulate you. I wish to thank you. You go from strength to strength. I have read 'All for Love,' I have read 'Only a Factory Girl,' I know 'Madcap Myrtle' by heart. But this—this is your bravest and best. It tears the heart-strings."

"Yes?"

"Indeed yes! I have read it three times since you most kindly sent me the volume—I wish to thank you once more for the charming inscription—and I think I may say that I am a better, sweeter, deeper man. I am full of human charity and kindliness towards my species."

"No, really?"

"Indeed, indeed I am."

"Towards the whole species?"

"Towards the whole species."

"Even young Bingo?" I said, trying him pretty high.

"My nephew? Richard?" He looked a bit thoughtful, but stuck it like a man and refused to hedge. "Yes, even towards Richard. Well—that is to say—perhaps—yes, even towards Richard."

"That's good, because I wanted to talk about him. He's pretty hard up, you know."

"In straitened circumstances?"

"Stoney. And he could use a bit of the right stuff paid every quarter, if you felt like unbelting."

He mused awhile, and got through a slab of cold guinea-hen before replying. He toyed with the book, and it fell open at page two hundred and fifteen. I couldn't remember what was on page two hundred and fifteen, but it must have been something tolerably zippy, for his expression changed and he gazed up at me with misty eyes, as if he'd taken a shade too much mustard with his last bite of ham.

"Very well, Mr. Wooster," he said. "Fresh from a perusal of this noble work of yours, I cannot harden my heart. Richard shall have his allowance."

"Stout fellow!" I said. Then it occurred to me that the expression might strike a chappie who weighed seventeen stone as a bit personal. "Good egg, I mean. That'll take a weight off his mind. He wants to get married, you know."

"I did not know. And I am not sure that I altogether approve. Who is the lady?"

"Well, as a matter of fact, she's a waitress."

He leaped in his seat.

"You don't say so, Mr. Wooster! This is remarkable. This is most cheering. I had not given the boy credit for such tenacity of purpose. An excellent trait in him which I had not hitherto suspected. I recollect clearly that, on the occasion when I first had the pleasure of making your acquaintance, nearly eighteen months ago, Richard was desirous of marrying this same waitress."

I had to break it to him.

"Well, not absolutely this same waitress. In fact, quite a different waitress. Still, a waitress, you know."

The light of avuncular affection died out of the old boy's eyes.

"H'm!" he said, a bit dubiously. "I had supposed that Richard was displaying the quality of constancy which is so rare in the modern young man. I—I must think it over."

So we left it at that, and I came away and told Bingo the position of affairs.

"Allowance O.K.," I said. "Uncle blessing a trifle wobbly."

"Doesn't he seem to want the wedding-bells to ring out?"

"I left him thinking it over. If I were a bookie, I should feel justified in offering a hundred to eight against."

"You can't have approached him properly. I might have known you would muck it up," said young Bingo. Which, considering what I had been through for his sake, struck me as a good bit sharper than a serpent's tooth.

"It's awkward," said young Bingo. "It's infernally awkward. I can't tell you all the details at the moment, but—yes, it's awkward."

He helped himself absently to a handful of my cigars, and pushed off.

I DIDN'T see him again for three days. Early in the afternoon of the third day he blew in with a flower in his buttonhole and a look on his face as if someone had hit him behind the ear with a stuffed eel-skin.

"Hallo, Bertie!"

"Hallo, old turnip! Where have you been all this while?"

"Oh, here and there. Ripping weather we're having, Bertie."

"Not bad."

"I see the Bank Rate is down again."

"No, really?"

"Disturbing news from Lower Silesia, what?"

"Oh, dashed."

He pottered about the room for a bit, babbling at intervals. The boy seemed cuckoo.

"Oh, I say, Bertie," he said, suddenly, dropping a vase which he had picked off the mantelpiece and was fiddling with. "I know what it was I wanted to tell you. I'm married."

I stared at him. That flower in his buttonhole. That dazed look. Yes, he had all the symptoms; and yet the thing seemed incredible. The fact is, I suppose, I'd seen so many of young Bingo's love-affairs start off with a whoop and a rattle and poof themselves out half-way down the straight that I couldn't believe he had actually brought it off at last.

"Married!"

"Yes. This morning, at a registrar's in Holborn. I've just come from the wedding-breakfast."

I sat up in my chair. Alert. The man of affairs. It seemed to me that this thing wanted threshing out in all its aspects.

"Let's get this straight," I said. "You're really married?"

"Yes."

"The same girl you were in love with the day before yesterday?"

"What do you mean?"

"Well, you know what you're like. Tell me, what made you commit this rash act?"

"I wish the deuce you wouldn't talk like that. I married her because I love her, dash it. The best little woman," said young Bingo, "in the world."

"That's all right, and deuced creditable, I'm sure. But have you reflected what your uncle's going to say? The last I saw of him, he was by no means in a confetti-scattering mood."

"Bertie," said Bingo, "I'll be frank with you. The little woman rather put it up to me, if you know what I mean. I told her how my uncle felt about it, and she said that we must part unless I loved her enough to brave the old boy's wrath and marry her right away. So I had no alternative. I bought a buttonhole and went to it."

"And what do you propose to do now?"

"Oh, I've got it all planned out. After you've seen my uncle and broken the news—"

"What!"

"After you've——"

"You don't mean to say you think you're going to lug *me* into it?"

He looked at me like Lilian Gish coming out of a swoon.

"Is this Bertie Wooster talking?" he said, pained.

"Yes, it jolly well is."

"Bertie, old man," said Bingo, patting me gently here and there, "reflect! We were at sch——"

"Oh, all right!"

"Good man! I knew I could rely on you. She's waiting down below in the hall. We'll pick her up and dash round to Pounceby Gardens right away."

I HAD only seen the bride before in her waitress kit, and I was rather expecting that on her wedding day she would have launched out into something fairly zippy in the way of upholstery. The first gleam of hope I had felt since the start of this black business came to me when I saw that, instead of being all velvet and scent and flowery hat, she was dressed in dashed good taste. Quiet. Nothing loud. As far as looks went she might have stepped straight out of Berkeley Square.

"This is my old pal Bertie Wooster, darling," said Bingo. "We were at school together, weren't we, Bertie?"

"We were!" I said. "How do you do? I think we—er—met at lunch the other day, didn't we?"

"Oh, yes. How do you do?"

"My uncle eats out of Bertie's hand," explained Bingo. "So he's coming round with us to start things off and kind of pave the way. Hi, taxi!"

We didn't talk much on the journey. Kind of tense feeling. I was glad when the cab stopped at old Bittlesham's wigwam and we all hopped out. I left Bingo and wife in the hall, while I went upstairs to the drawing-room, and the butler toddled off to dig out the big chief.

While I was prowling about the room, waiting for him to show up, I suddenly caught sight of that bally "Woman Who Braved All" lying on one of the tables. It was open at page two hundred and fifteen, and a passage heavily marked in pencil caught my eye. And directly I read it, I saw that it was all to the mustard and was going to help me in my business.

This was the passage:—

"What can prevail"—Millicent's eyes flashed as she faced the stern old man—"what can prevail against a pure and all-consuming love? Neither principalities nor powers, my lord, nor all the puny prohibitions of guardians and parents. I love your son, Lord Windermere, and nothing can keep us apart. Since time first began, this love of ours was fated, and who are you to pit yourself against the decrees of Fate?"

The earl looked at her keenly from beneath his bushy eyebrows.

"Humph!" he said.

Before I had time to refresh my memory as to what Millicent's come-back had been to that remark, the door opened and old Bittlesham rolled in. All over me, as usual.

"My dear Mr. Wooster, this is an unexpected pleasure. Pray take a seat. What can I do for you?"

"Well, the fact is, I'm more or less in the capacity of a jolly old ambassador at the moment. Representing young Bingo, you know."

His geniality sagged a trifle, I thought, but he didn't heave me out, so I pushed on.

"The way I always look at it," I said, "is that it's dashed difficult for anything to prevail against what you might call a pure and all-consuming love. I mean, can it be done? I doubt it."

My eyes didn't exactly flash as I faced

the stern old man, but I sort of waggled my eyebrows. He puffed a bit, and looked doubtful.

"We discussed this matter at our last meeting, Mr. Wooster. And on that occasion——"

"Yes. But there have been developments, as it were, since then. The fact of the matter is," I said, coming to the point, "this morning young Bingo went and jumped off the dock."

"Good heavens!" He jerked himself to his feet with his mouth open. "Why? Where? Which dock?"

I saw that he wasn't quite on.

"I was speaking metaphorically," I explained, "if that's the word I want. I mean he got married."

"Married!"

"Absolutely hitched up. I hope you aren't ratty about it, what? Young blood, you know. Two loving hearts, and all that."

He panted in a rather overwrought way.

"I am greatly disturbed by your news. I—I consider that I have been—er—defied. Yes, defied."

"But who are you to pit yourself against the decrees of Fate?" I said, taking a look at the prompt-book out of the corner of my eye.

"Eh?"

"You see, this love of theirs was fated. Since time began, you know."

I'm bound to admit that if he'd said "Humph!" at this juncture, he would have had me stymied. Luckily, it didn't occur to him. There was a silence, during which he appeared to brood a bit. Then his eye fell on the book, and he gave a sort of start.

"Why, bless my soul, Mr. Wooster, you have been quoting!"

"More or less."

"I thought your words sounded familiar." His whole appearance changed, and he gave a sort of gurgling chuckle. "Dear me, dear me, you know my weak spot!" He picked up the book, and buried himself in it for quite a while. I began to think he had forgotten I was there. After a bit, however, he put it down again, and wiped his eyes. "Ah, well!" he said.

I shuffled my feet and hoped for the best.

"Ah, well!" he said again. "I must not be like Lord Windermere, must I, Mr. Wooster? Tell me, did you draw that haughty old man from a living model?"

"Oh, no. Just thought of him and bunged him down, you know."

"Genius!" murmured old Bittlesham. "Genius! Well, Mr. Wooster, you have won me over. Who, as you say, am I to pit myself against the decrees of Fate? I will write to Richard to-night and inform him of my consent to his marriage."

"You can slip him the glad news in person," I said. "He's waiting downstairs, with wife complete. I'll pop down and send them up. Cheerio, and thanks very much. Bingo will be most awfully bucked."

I shot out and went downstairs. Bingo and Mrs. were sitting on a couple of chairs like patients in a dentist's waiting-room.

"Well?" said Bingo, eagerly.

"All over except the hand-clasping," I replied, slapping the old crumpet on the back. "Charge up and get matey. Toodle-oo, old things. You know where to find me, if wanted. A thousand congratulations, and all that sort of rot."

And I pipped, not wishing to be fawned upon.

YOU never can tell in this world. If ever I felt that something attempted, something done, had earned a night's repose, it was when I got back to the flat and shoved my feet up on the mantelpiece and started to absorb the cup of tea which Jeeves had brought in. Used as I am to seeing Life's sitters blow up in the home-stretch and finish nowhere, I couldn't see any cause for alarm in this affair of young Bingo's. All he had to do when I left him in Pounceby Gardens was to walk upstairs with the little missus and collect the blessing. I was so convinced of this that when, about half an hour later, he came galloping into my sitting-room, all I thought was that he wanted to thank me in broken accents and tell me what a good chap I had been. I merely beamed benevolently on the old creature as he entered, and was just going to offer him a cigarette when I observed that he seemed to have something on his mind. In fact, he looked as if something solid had hit him in the solar plexus.

"My dear old soul," I said, "what's up?"

Bingo plunged about the room.

"I *will* be calm!" he said, knocking over an occasional table. "Calm, dammit!" He upset a chair.

"Surely nothing has gone wrong?"

Bingo uttered one of those hollow, mirthless yelps.

"Only every bally thing that could go wrong. What do you think happened after you left us? You know that beastly book you insisted on sending my uncle?"

It wasn't the way I should have put it myself, but I saw the poor old bean was upset for some reason or other, so I didn't correct him.

"'The Woman Who Braved All'?" I said. "It came in dashed useful. It was by quoting bits out of it that I managed to talk him round."

"Well, it didn't come in useful when we got into the room. It was lying on the

table, and, after we had started to chat a bit, and everything was going along nicely, the little woman spotted it. 'Oh, have you read this, Lord Bittlesham?' she said. 'Three times already,' said my uncle. 'I'm so glad,' said the little woman. 'Why, are you also an admirer of Rosie M. Banks?' asked the old boy, beaming. 'I *am* Rosie M. Banks!' said the little woman."

"Oh, my aunt! Not really?"

"Yes."

"But how could she be? I mean, dash it, she was slinging the foodstuffs at the Senior Liberal Club."

Bingo gave the settee a moody kick.

"She took the job to collect material for a book she's writing called 'Mervyn Keene, Clubman.'"

"She might have told you."

"It made such a hit with her when she found that I loved her for herself alone, despite her humble station, that she kept it under her hat. She meant to spring it on me later on, she said."

"Well, what happened then?"

"There was the dickens of a painful scene. The old boy nearly got apoplexy. Called her an impostor. They both started talking at once at the top of their voices, and the thing ended with the little woman buzzing off to her publishers to collect proofs as a preliminary to getting a written apology from the old boy. What's going to happen now, I don't know. Apart from the fact that my uncle will be as mad as a wet hen when he finds out that he has been fooled, there's going to be a lot of trouble when the little woman discovers that we worked the Rosie M. Banks wheeze with a view to trying to get me married to somebody else. You see, one of the things that first attracted her to me was the fact that I had never been in love before."

"Did you tell her that?"

"Yes."

"Great Scott!"

"Well, I hadn't been—not really in love. There's all the difference in the world between—— Well, never mind that. What am I going to do? That's the point."

"I don't know."

"Thanks," said young Bingo. "That's a lot of help."

NEXT morning he rang me up on the 'phone just after I'd got the bacon and eggs into my system—the one moment of the day, in short, when a chappie wishes to muse on life absolutely undisturbed.

"Bertie!"

"Hallo!"

"Things are hotting up."

"What's happened now?"

'My uncle has given the little woman's proofs the once-over, and admits her claim. I've just been having five snappy minutes with him on the telephone. He says that you and I made a fool of him, and he could hardly speak, he was so shirty. Still, he made it clear all right that my allowance has gone phut again."

"I'm sorry."

"Don't waste time being sorry for me," said young Bingo, grimly. "He's coming to call on you to-day to demand a personal explanation."

"Great Scott!"

"And the little woman is coming to call on you to demand a personal explanation."

"Good Lord!"

"I shall watch your future career with some considerable interest," said young Bingo.

I bellowed for Jeeves.

"Jeeves!"

"Sir?"

"I'm in the soup."

"Indeed, sir?"

I sketched out the scenario for him.

"What would you advise?"

"I think, if I were you, sir, I would accept Mr. Pitt-Waley's invitation immediately. If you remember, sir, he invited you to shoot with him in Norfolk this week."

"So he did! By Jove, Jeeves, you're always right. Meet me at the station with my things the first train after lunch. I'll go and lie low at the club for the rest of the morning."

"Would you require my company on this visit, sir?"

"Do you want to come?"

"If I might suggest it, sir, I think it would be better if I remained here and kept in touch with Mr. Little. I might possibly hit upon some method of pacifying the various parties, sir."

"Right-o! But, if you do, you're a marvel."

I DIDN'T enjoy myself much in Norfolk. It rained most of the time, and, when it wasn't raining, I was so dashed jumpy I couldn't hit a thing. By the end of the week I couldn't stand it any longer. Too bally absurd, I mean, being marooned miles away in the country just because young Bingo's uncle and wife wanted to have a few words with me. I made up my mind that I would pop back and do the strong, manly thing, by lying low in my flat and telling Jeeves to inform everybody who called that I wasn't at home.

I sent Jeeves a telegram, saying I was coming, and drove straight to Bingo's place when I reached town. I wanted to find out the general posish of affairs. But appar-

There was the dickens of a painful scene. The old boy nearly got apoplexy. Called her an impostor. They both started talking at the top of their voices.

ently the man was out. I rang a couple of times, but nothing happened, and I was just going to leg it when I heard the sound of footsteps inside, and the door opened. It wasn't one of the cheeriest moments of my career when I found myself peering into the globular face of Lord Bittlesham.

"Oh, er—hallo!" I said. And there was a bit of a pause.

I don't quite know what I had been expecting the old boy to do if by bad luck we should ever meet again, but I had a sort of general idea that he would turn fairly purple and start almost immediately to let me have it in the gizzard. It struck me as somewhat rummy, therefore, when he simply smiled weakly. A sort of frozen smile it was. His eyes kind of bulged, and he swallowed once or twice.

"Er——" he said.

I waited for him to continue, but apparently that was all there was.

"Bingo in?" I said, after a rather embarrassing pause.

HE shook his head, and smiled again. And then, suddenly, just as the flow of conversation had begun to slacken once more, I'm dashed if he didn't make a sort of lumbering leap back into the flat and bang the door.

I couldn't understand it. But, as it seemed that the interview, such as it was, was over, I thought I might as well be shifting. I had just started down the stairs when I met young Bingo, charging up three steps at a time.

"Hallo, Bertie!" he said. "Where did you spring from? I thought you were out of town."

"I've just got back. I looked in on you to see how the land lay."

"How do you mean?"

"Why, all that business, you know."

"Oh, that," said young Bingo, airily. "That was all settled days ago. The dove of peace is flapping its wings all over the place. Everything's as right as it can be. Jeeves fixed it all up. He's a marvel, that man, Bertie, I've always said so. Put the whole thing straight in half a minute with one of those brilliant ideas of his."

"This is topping!"

"I knew you'd be pleased."

"Congratulate you."

"Thanks."

"What did Jeeves do? I couldn't think of any solution of the bally thing myself."

"Oh, he took the matter in hand and smoothed it all out in a second. My uncle and the little woman are tremendous pals now. They gas away by the hour together about literature and all that. He's always dropping in for a chat."

This reminded me.

"He's in there now," I said. "I say, Bingo, how *is* your uncle these days?"

"Much as usual. How do you mean?"

"I mean he hasn't been feeling the strain of things a bit, has he? He seemed rather strange in his manner just now."

"Why, have you met him?"

"He opened the door when I rang. And then, after he had stood goggling at me for a bit, he suddenly banged the door in my face. Puzzled me, you know. I mean, I could have understood it if he'd ticked me off and all that, but, dash it, the man seemed absolutely scared."

Young Bingo laughed a care-free laugh.

"Oh, that's all right," he said. "I forgot to tell you about that. Meant to write, but kept putting it off. He thinks you're a looney."

"He—what?"

"Yes. That was Jeeves's idea, you know. It's solved the whole problem splendidly. He suggested that I should tell my uncle that I had acted in perfect good faith in introducing you to him as Rosie M. Banks; that I had repeatedly had it from your own lips that you were, and that I didn't see any reason why you shouldn't be. The idea being that you were subject to hallucinations and generally potty. And then we got hold of Sir Roderick Glossop—you remember, the old boy whose kid you pushed into the lake that day down at Ditteredge Hall—and he rallied round with his story of how he had come to lunch with you once and found your bedroom full up with cats and fish, and how you had pinched his hat while you were driving past his car in a taxi, and all that, you know. It just rounded the whole thing off nicely. I always say, and I always shall say, that you've only got to stand on Jeeves and Fate can't touch you."

I can put up with a good deal, but there are limits.

"Well, of all the dashed bits of nerve I ever——"

Bingo looked at me, astonished.

"You aren't *annoyed?*" he said.

"Annoyed! At having half London going about under the impression that I'm off my chump? Dash it all——"

"Bertie," said Bingo, "you amaze and wound me. If I had dreamed that you would object to doing a trifling good turn to a fellow who's been a pal of yours for fifteen years——"

"Yes, but look here——"

"Have you forgotten," said young Bingo, "that we were at school together?"

I PUSHED on to the old flat, seething like the dickens. One thing I was jolly certain of, and that was that this was where Jeeves and I parted company. A topping valet, of course, none better in London, but I wasn't going to allow that to weaken me. I buzzed into the flat like an east wind—and there was the box of cigarettes on the small table and the illustrated weekly papers on the big table, and my slippers on the floor, and every dashed thing so bally *right*, if you know what I mean, that I started to calm down in the first two seconds. It was like one of those moments in a play where the chappie, about to steep himself in crime, suddenly hears the soft, appealing strains of the old melody he learned at his mother's knee. Softened, I mean to say. That's the word I want. I was softened.

And then through the doorway there shimmered good old Jeeves in the wake of a tray full of the necessary ingredients, and there was something about the mere look of the man——

However, I steeled the old heart and had a stab at it.

"I have just met Mr. Little, Jeeves," I said.

"Indeed, sir?"

"He—er—he told me you had been helping him."

"I did my best, sir. And I am happy to say that matters now appear to be proceeding smoothly. Whisky, sir?"

"Thanks. Er—Jeeves."

"Sir?"

"Another time——"

"Sir?"

"Oh, nothing—— Not all the soda, Jeeves."

"Very good, sir."

He started to drift out.

"Oh, Jeeves!"

"Sir?"

"I wish—that is—I think—I mean—oh, nothing."

"Very good, sir. The cigarettes are at your elbow, sir. Dinner will be ready at a quarter to eight precisely, unless you desire to dine out?"

"No. I'll dine in."

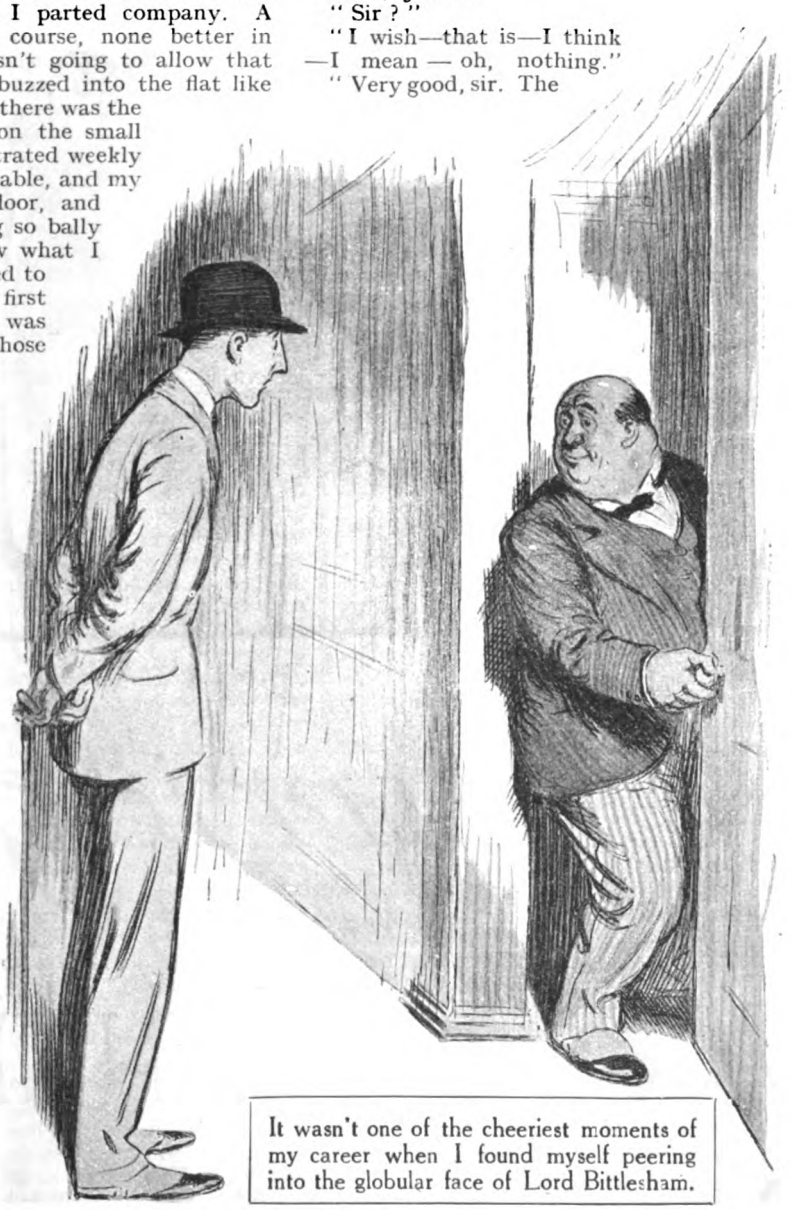
"Yes, sir."

"Jeeves!"

"Sir?"

"Oh, nothing," I said.

"Very good, sir," said Jeeves.



It wasn't one of the cheeriest moments of my career when I found myself peering into the globular face of Lord Bittlesham.

Marriages are apt to decline into unions of tedium.

Marriage

PART II.

by

ARNOLD BENNETT

THE WIFE'S INDIVIDUALITY.

MARRIAGES are apt to go wrong in their middle period, that is to say the period beginning ten or fifteen years after the wedding. I do not mean that they are apt to break up with violence and tragedy and scandal, for the average marriage survives everything but death; and I shall have no word to say here about those comparatively rare accidents of passion which lead to a regrettable publicity in the newspapers. I mean simply that marriages—and quite a large proportion of them—are apt to deteriorate or decline into unions of tedium, producing in both parties a sensation of grave disappointment, not only with marriage as an institution, but with life itself as an institution.

Such marriages owe their continuance less to inclination than to feelings of duty and to an apprehension of the immense difficulty and danger attendant upon any attempt to arrange a separation. They

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are kept together by dignity and prudence, and if dignity and prudence did not stand in the way the partners would in numerous instances soon be occupying separate establishments.

Yet there may be nothing fundamentally askew. The income may be sufficient; manners and tempers may be good; mutual respect may flourish; even affection, though dulled, may not have totally expired! The trouble indeed is mysterious. And neither husband nor wife takes much trouble to unravel the mystery. The pair accept the state of affairs, as people used to accept the plague and infant mortality, as something beyond the cleverness of man to prevent or to cure.

This apathy concerning the greatest of human experiences is very serious. If the husband's business were going wrong he would hold an exhaustive inquiry; if the wife's housekeeping books showed a sinister leakage she would not rest until she had discovered the source of trouble. But since the problem affects naught but the daily, weekly, yearly happiness of two persons and the trend of their entire existence—it is neglected. We are so marvellously constructed! Is it not marvellous that a husband, that repository of common sense, who well knows that his business is first and chiefly and merely a means to live, should not exercise his sagacity upon the super-business of actual living? The singular fellow will put his brain into the work of eight hours whose aim is to enable him to enjoy the other sixteen hours—and then will calmly suffer the lamentable dissatisfaction which poisons the sixteen hours without a serious effort to get to the bottom of it.

But perhaps even if both partners started to solve the mystery they would not succeed, for the same reason that people too frequently cannot see what is staring them in the face. The chances are that they would begin from false premises and arrive nowhere at all.

When no obvious reason can be perceived for the unsatisfactoriness of marriage in its middle stage, when the principal factors of contentment, such as affection, respect, fair health, politeness, sane habits, and suitable income, are all undeniably present—and yet the result is a corroding discontent, then in all probability the mischief springs from the monotony of daily existence. More briefly, the home is a bore. The husband leaves it in the morning with pleasant anticipation, and returns to it in the evening with a sigh. Mere tedium is the explanation; and I am convinced that an immense number of otherwise successful homes are fatally spoilt by tedium.

NOW the origin of tedium, like the origin of nearly all the maladies from which decent homes suffer, lies in the wife. When the home is tedious it is a hundred to one that the wife is bored or discontented. One is told that the mood of the husband decides the mood of the home; but, though this dictum is true, it does not penetrate far enough into the mysteries of marriage; for the mood of the husband as a general rule answers openly to the secret mood of the wife—without the conscious knowledge of either of them.

Wives, especially if they are mature, are bored by the everlasting sameness of their days. The wonder is that more of them do not revolt. The husband has a far more diverting time. He may be worried, but he is also diverted, by his daily excursion into the world. His wits are always being sharpened, his power of observation exercised, his interests dragged out of their rut.

The wife escapes only from the home into the shops. She has had a rich and overflowing dose of home by the time the husband comes back at night, critical and egotistic. The domestic evening does provide some change for the husband, but it provides none for the wife, whose very holidays are passed with the man whose character she knows backwards and who can offer her no novelty of companionship. So her existence proceeds—and husbands have the effrontery to hint that wives are dull! Of course they are. Cleopatra would have been dull under similar treatment and conditions. The wife's zest has withered in a vast desert of sameness.

But, it will be said, women are not the slaves they were. The taste for amusement and diversion has enormously grown. Well, it has. I admit that. Things are better than in the past, when—particularly in the provinces—the awful dailiness of life could find absolutely no relief, and ennui brooded over the land in hours of leisure like a heavy cloud. In some circles of society pleasure has developed into a mania, and the picture-papers are half full of women who seem to live for pleasure alone. These women, however, are relatively few in number, and their chief social function is to rouse morbid envy in the hearts of the innumerable other women who are precluded from imitating them to the smallest extent.

I will go farther and admit that the resorts and manufactories of pleasure for ordinary persons have multiplied tenfold and that they are well patronized. But examine them, and you will see that they are patronized mainly by the youthful. Visit, for example, a dance-palace. The

impression you receive is one of gaiety and the joy of life. But where are the middle-aged women ? Where are the stout, plain women, the women worn by domesticity ? Not there.

Yet have they not the same need of diversion as their prettier and slimmer juniors ? Women do not precisely *want* to be stout and middle-aged. They want acutely *not* to be stout and middle-aged. And if they have been unable to avoid these calamities the fault is not theirs. Neither are they criminals. Neither is there the least justification for hiding them away as though they were dead They are not dead. The same yearning for relaxation, change, ecstasy, in some form or other, characterizes twelve stone avoirdupois at forty-five as eight stone at twenty-five. And I have no doubt at all that, on the average, the case of twelve stone and forty-five is rather a hard case, a case which suffers from lack of attention, and notably from being deprived of that which is its rightful due—not merely in regard to the form of diversion usually described as " pleasure," but in regard to all forms of diversion, including both the instructive and the social. The mature woman is neglected. Even the big London shops, according to their advertisements, have only just discovered that mature women and stout women exist and may conceivably be interested in clothes—their own clothes.

The blame for this state of affairs rests upon the whole of society—and especially upon that portion of it which consists of mature husbands, who leave their mature wives to fend for themselves in nearly everything except material matters. And it is the husbands who are especially punished for the ill-doing. The varying charm of the house (I repeat and insist) depends on the wife. The wife cannot produce the varying charm unless her individuality is variously nourished; the husband omits to see that it is variously nourished ; the home suffers.

The remedy is not difficult for the husband to apply. What the wife wants is more contacts with the world, not excepting the world of ideas. It is the lack of these that makes her dull and the home dull. Unless she is an extraordinary woman she will not get the contacts without the active interest and intervention of the husband. And amusement or pleasure contacts, though they are important and she does not obtain enough of them, are not the most important. (Moreover, pleasure contacts often involve expense which the household cannot afford.) It is the woman's intellect and intelligence which require food. She slips into a groove as the years pass. The husband leaves her there instead of cheerfully pulling her out.

Husbands have the effrontery to hint that wives are dull! Of course they are. Cleopatra would have been dull under similar treatment and conditions.

How many housewives read, or, if they read, take reading as other than a dope? But let a husband say to his wife: "Look here! Here's something that I've found interesting, and I think it will interest you." Watch the immediate quickening of the wife's faculties as she begins to read the book or article. It is

remain solitary unto themselves, like impregnable islands in the social sea, because the husband absurdly and wickedly forgets to energize the wife to the performance of those useful mind-enlarging activities for which she is fitted, but which

Visit a dance-palace. Where are the middle-aged women—the stout, plain women? Not there.

touching. I have seen homes transformed, temporarily, if not permanently, by this simple gesture.

Then there is the question of hospitalities. Hospitality need cost little or nothing, and in middle-class homes it is by no means sufficiently practised. A circle of friends means a series of stimulating contacts; it means change, variety, fresh experience of human nature, the broadening of ideas. Receiving visits is valuable; and yet more valuable, for the wife, is the returning of visits, because this involves emergence from the eternal home into a new social atmosphere. But a circle of friends is not achieved without some substantial creative effort—which the husband and the wife must share; and while the bulk of the effort must fall to the wife, the inspiring energy for it must usually come from the husband. Tens of thousands of homes she will not undertake save under the masculine stimulus.

There is another point. The average wife does not get enough holidays. The average husband gets a day and a half every week, besides his annual holiday. The wife's working week consists of seven days; for there is no period in the week when she can throw off the burden of housekeeping. Never at noon on Saturdays can she say like the husband, with a sigh of relief: "Well, anyway, I'm free until Monday morning." On the contrary, the week-end often means far more responsibility and more work. Many wives have even to keep house during their so-called vacation, and thus obtain no real relief whatever. And so they continue without surcease for twenty years, thirty years, half a lifetime! At best the wife who always takes vacation in the company of her husband only achieves

a partial holiday. She has for ever to play the wife, and in the majority of cases it is easier to play the wife than the husband. The husband expects preferential treatment, and usually receives it. In my view much good would be accomplished if husband and wife could spend at least a portion of their holidays separately. Benefit would result, even though the devoted pair preferred to spend all the time together. For, here again, the wife's individuality would have a better opportunity of self-expression. The cultivation of the wife's individuality is assuredly one of the chief secrets of an interesting home, as in the neglect or repression of the wife's individuality is the chief explanation of the tedium of homes. I do not say that a full-blossoming wife means always a marriage of lasting agreeableness. We all know cases in which the wife's individuality has knocked the home sideways and made it into something which does not resemble heaven.

The drawbacks of the conjugal home may be, and generally are, astoundingly mysterious and complex in their causation. An encyclopædia in twenty volumes would not exhaust them, and no one but a sublime idiot would venture to put the causes into one nutshell. I go no farther than the submission that the vague, never defined unsatisfactoriness which impairs the perfection of innumerable otherwise sound marriages is very frequently due to the insufficient nourishment of the wife's individuality, and that this explanation seldom occurs to the people concerned—or to anybody else. But I certainly do not offer the explanation as containing a cure-all for the disappointingness of wedlock.

MANNERS IN PRIVATE.

So much for the cultivation of the wife's individuality as a leading factor in conjugal success. There are other factors of great importance which it would be inconvenient or futile to discuss here, either because the delicate complexity of them would require a whole volume for this useful examination, or because, springing from the deepest roots of individual temperaments, they are unalterable in each case and therefore beyond the control of the partners. A fundamental clash of temperaments may secretly or openly devastate the union of two angels of virtue and common sense; and no ingenuity, no forbearance, nor sublimity of character can prevent it. I leave these terrific topics and come to a factor which, though superficial in its nature, is nevertheless of high consequence. The human skin is superficial, but it plays no mean *rôle* in the functioning of the human body, as those whom an accident has rendered partially skinless soon discover.

I mean the factor of manners. A husband and wife in love, especially if they are young, are too apt to reject the formalities of courtesy as being artificial, irksome, unnecessary, even insincere, in such an ideal and passionate union as theirs. They imagine that soul will speak to soul, without the bother of employing those tedious tricks of phrase and gesture which mankind has invented and gradually perfected for the conduct of human relations. They imagine that they are above all that sort of thing, and that somehow all that sort of thing is a slur on intimacy, an aspersion on the genuineness of the love which binds them together.

They seem to say :—

"Oh! he will understand! Oh! she won't mind. She knows what is in my soul. He cannot possibly be in any doubt as to my feelings. Why then trouble with these ceremonies and these rites, which are for persons who don't comprehend one another?"

I do not assert that all or nearly all married couples reason thus, but the evidence is abundant that a considerable proportion of them do. And never was reasoning more false and absurd.

Good manners were devised to act as a buffer between individualities in collision, and every meeting of individualities is a collision. They soften the crudity of human inter-communication. They are the buttons on the foils. They are the veil which hides certain secret places of the mind. No mind, however loving, could bear to see plainly into all the recesses of another mind. And the reader has only to lay bare his own mind in order to admit the truth of this statement. A society, whether of two or of many, is and must be organized on the basis of a thousand concealments. Good manners are a convention, and conventions are the preservatives of society. Without them blood would soon metaphorically or actually flow and the social fabric would fly apart. And further, good manners are a symbol of real or supposed good feeling. If the good feeling exists they serve hourly to illustrate it—and good feeling is effective only in so far as it is illustrated. If it doesn't exist, they in some measure take its place. At worst they cannot impair the good feeling; they always strengthen it.

So far from good manners being superfluous in extreme intimacy, they are more necessary in extreme intimacy than in mere friendship or acquaintance; because each intimate, whatever he or she may bravely pretend, is in truth extremely sensitive in his reactions to the behaviour of the other

intimate. Often the sensitiveness approaches the morbid. Ill-mannered phrases and tones remain obstinately in the memory, waiting a chance to spring up out of recollection and exasperate a difficult later moment. Again, good manners, by which I mean ceremonious good manners, are the surest preventive of outbreaks of bad temper. Bad temper needs a jumping-off place, and good manners will deprive it of a jumping-off place; whereas a breezy, curt rudeness, though founded on real affection, will provide a dozen jumping-off places in half an hour, and though eleven of them may be refused the temptation of the twelfth may prove irresistible.

The intimates ought to watch gently but carefully over each other's manners—and their own. It is possible to be too ceremonious, but assuredly it is not easy. Even in the "solitude of two" the current code of politeness between the sexes should rarely be abandoned, and should never be abandoned for long. There are couples who leave their manners behind them in the church; there are couples who leave their manners behind them at the railway-station on the return from the honeymoon; there are couples who carelessly drop them bit by bit on the stiff road through the first year of wedlock. They are all ill-advised, and they all ultimately pay for their negligence. "Love one another" is a prince among marital maxims; but love is not to be maintained by vigilance alone. "Be polite to one another" (ceremoniously polite, formally polite, yes, and if advisable insincerely polite!) is also a prince among marital maxims; and politeness *is* to be maintained by vigilance; everybody can achieve it with patience and practice.

All which is no doubt platitudinous, but the value of platitudes is considerable, and some of us are inclined to ignore them.

MANNERS IN PUBLIC.

So far I have had in mind chiefly the behaviour of the pair when they are alone together. It is not absolutely unknown in the history of the institution of marriage that husbands and wives behave incorrectly to one another in the presence of others. In so doing they are, of course, guilty of a gross breach of manners towards the others. Still, the unfortunate and reprehensible thing does occur. I would divide the bad behavers into three classes.

First, those who always indulge in friction whether they are alone or whether they are not alone. (Sometimes both parties are to blame, sometimes only one; if only one party is to blame, then it is usually the same party throughout.) The friction is almost continuous, and seems to satisfy a profound need. It is usually not dangerous. It does not usually point to any deep-seated misunderstanding. It may flourish for forty years without doing serious harm. You may see married

"Be polite to one another," is a prince among marital maxims.

children of sixty or seventy bickering happily like the darlings of a nursery, and they are capable of expiring in a squabble. I should describe this form of naughtiness as mere ill-breeding, for which the guilty person or persons ought to be well smacked. I should not describe it as a crime against love and humanity, though it is certainly an affliction for the intimate friends of the couple, and a still worse affliction for their acquaintances, who have not been acclimatized to it and cannot appraise it at its true unimportance. If it were a grave malady and led to grave consequences somebody might set about to cure it. But being a simple mild nuisance, it is tolerated, as all sorts of mild nuisances are tolerated.

The second class of bad behavers in public consists of those who bicker in public while never bickering if they are alone. This case is more serious than the first case. It denotes that something is being constantly suppressed—driven in, like a poison that ought to come out, and coming out only on favourable occasions. You may say that the presence of other people scarcely constitutes a favourable occasion for a display of conjugal friction. But the fact is that in many marriages a partner who feels himself or herself aggrieved may be so—not intimidated, but—impressed by the other partner that he or she is incapable of raising a complaint without the supporting presence of spectators. The phenomenon indeed is quite common and within the knowledge of everybody. Also, the aggrieved partner may refrain from private grumbling because he or she fears that it would lead to a tremendous "scene," whereas the chances of a scene are immensely reduced, if not entirely destroyed, by the restraint of company.

This form of conjugal friction is intensely and specially annoying to the partner who is attacked. He (or she) is taken at a disadvantage; he cannot effectively reply; and he knows that when the company has departed again sugar would not melt in the mouth of the attacker, who, after all, has planted the dart and is content with that feat. Blame may nevertheless be due more to the attacked than to the attacking partner. The attacked partner is obviously the stronger, for in the nature of the affair he exercises moral sway over the attacker. It should have been his (or her) business to discover the grievance before it had begun to rankle seriously, and to deal with it somehow in privacy. A couple who rehearse their troubles to an audience are likely one day to have a strictly private performance with a catastrophic curtain. They are living dangerously over the thin crust of a chronic suppression of bad feeling.

The third class of bad behavers in public is even more grave than the second because, while it may be less unpleasant to the less thoughtful section of the public, it is symptomatic of a more serious suppression. We are all acquainted with married couples who never indulge in friction before the world, but one member of whom misses no opportunity of emitting broad and derogatory generalizations about the opposite sex. When a wife has a habit of saying: "Of course men are——," or the husband of saying: "Of course women are——," followed by fretful criticism of a whole sex, then be sure that the marriage is not proceeding smoothly, and that the critic, though apparently criticizing a sex, is in reality criticizing one particular specimen of that sex, the specimen whom he or she knows best and suffers most from.

This is especially true of wives. A man can generalize without in secret being personal; a woman cannot. A woman seldom or never employs a generalization save as a cover to a personality.

Such a subtle form of public attack is the most exasperating of all. It defies a retort. Indeed, to try a counter-attack is more perilous than to do nothing whatever. And its subtlety, its diabolic indirectness, its sinister cautiousness, signify not merely that the trouble is grave but that the critic has little hope of remedying the trouble. The couple, if ever at any time they practised candour, have ceased to be frank with each other. The hidden disease is none the less ugly and menacing because it is hidden. Best to call it a tumour at once and put a lancet into it. A happy sequel cannot be guaranteed to this surgery, but risk has to be taken. To shirk the risk is to invite the final disaster.

PLEASING AND BEING PLEASED.

TO conclude. The basis of a successful marriage is mutual affection and esteem. These are not all that is necessary to success, and a marriage may fail or half-fail when they are both present; but they are indispensable, though esteem without affection will sometimes procure a fair imitation of success.

The chief enemies of success in marriages in which affection and esteem are both present are, first, the neglect of the wife's individuality; and, second, mistakes of deportment by one or both parties. The first matter lies principally in the hands of the husband, the second principally in the hands of the wife. A starved individuality needs nourishment, but will probably not have either the enterprise or the energy to feed itself, and if help is not given will slowly sink into a dullness more and more

flat. On the other hand, in a superficial but very important matter such as deportment, the husband will usually take his cue from the wife. And at any rate she, by hypothesis, is the exemplar of the graces of existence, and should act accordingly. Unfortunately, according to my observation, wives are more apt than husbands to sin against the code of good manners. The average husband has more authority, and beyond question more actual power, than the average wife. If he feels a grievance he can often get rid of it by the exercise of authority and power. The wife's dominion is less, and it is also less direct. When a difficulty reaches its crisis, the average wife gives way—or feigns to give way. She has the more trying *rôle* in marriage. She may not have the great worries, but she has more small worries than the husband. Her tongue is her chief weapon. I do not use this phrase in an offensive sense. I mean by it that whereas the husband can act without much arguing, the wife is bound to argue, to persuade, to cajole, to insist—nay, even to nag. She solaces herself with criticism.

And further, most women endow themselves with the right to criticize more than they are criticized. They claim sex-privilege to atone for their state of inferior economic freedom. I will not condemn them. Nor will I say that husbands as a class have fine manners in intimacy. Husbands, even the best, can be terrible. But their bad manners are, I think, less exasperating than those of wives, and less frequent. No wife will admit this in regard to herself, but nearly all wives will admit it in regard to other wives.

Wives are human; husbands not less so.

Her tongue is the average wife's chief weapon.

It is the duty of husbands to please; the same for wives. But whereas the first duty of the husband is to support and protect, the first duty of the wife is to please. Supporting is the husband's own department. Pleasing is the wife's own department. And to please is not enough, neither for the wife nor for the husband. In addition to pleasing, it is necessary to be pleased.

Next Month: "Children."

"Nobody saw me shoot him. It was done in a flash. But there was just time for our eyes to meet—and he knew—as he died."

The Room of The Secret

A COMPLETE SHORT NOVEL

by

MRS. C. N. WILLIAMSON

ILLUSTRATED BY HOWARD ELCOCK

I.

"DEAR Vienna! *Now* we shall be happy. *Now* we shall be gay!" cooed Lady Wandsworth, in the charming drawl imported from Virginia, and never anglicized. She flashed a dimpled smile at her table companions, grave dark son, grave dark daughter; but they remained grave. Behind Lady Wandsworth's youthful back a waiter raised his eyebrows as he turned away, and the corners of his lips went down. "Happy!"—"gay!" In Vienna, in the year 1922! What was this pretty foreign lady made of: flesh and blood or pink-and-white ice, that she did not see, did not feel?

But the pretty lady did feel, vaguely, gropingly, things she didn't wish to feel.

"What's the matter with you both?" she went on, fawn-brown eyes travelling from one dark, grave face to the other. "What's the matter with *everything?*"

Rodney Wandsworth (he'd been Sir Rodney since Eton days) did not answer. He looked down at his wine glass, scarcely touched, but Evelyn, his sister, spoke. "The war, Virgie, my child. That's the matter with everyone and everything."

"Oh, the *war!*" Lady Wandsworth dismissed the war, sent its memory to limbo. "It's been over nearly four years—four years that seem a hundred! Can't we forget? None of us ever felt as if Austria was an enemy country. You know she was dragged in. Do, please, let's be happy. Think what a wonderful time we had that spring of 1914 when Guido brought us here from Venice. Vienna was just the gayest, jolliest place! Those darling Magnonis, to lend us their lovely little castle! Wasn't it like a fairy story?"

"Yes, it was," said Evelyn, with a glance at her silent twin. "But—I think the fairies have gone from Austria now."

"Pooh!" Lady Wandsworth laughed. "You're both gloomy old things. I believe you're trying to punish me because I would insist on coming. Horrid of you! It wasn't only for myself I wanted to travel in Austria again. It was for Rod's sake, too, though I know he doesn't think so. Neither of you do. But I'm *not* your 'child,' though you call me one—I'm your mother. I do *sometimes* know what's best for you! Rod broods on the past as if he'd made the war himself. It wasn't *his* fault that poor Guido Magnoni was killed. And Guido being dead doesn't shut the door of Vienna in our faces. Coming back to a place with associations does one good. It's a test of character—a kind of shock—but a shock like waking up from nightmare. After the first, everything is easier. I'm sure Rod needs to be waked. He's been in a nightmare since the war. Why, he's been almost—*haunted*. Something had to be done for him. Why not this?"

"Why not this?" echoed Rodney. "Anyhow, we're here. We'll make the best of it. I don't want to be a spoil-sport, Virgie. Only, to be 'gay' in Vienna'll put us a bit out of the picture, I'm afraid."

"The *shops'll* be all right," Lady Wandsworth thought out aloud. "They say you can buy the most divine furs and things for tuppence!"

Rodney and Evelyn exchanged a faint smile across the table. Poor little Virgie! One of their pet names for her was "Butterfly." If she was selfish, in her pretty child-like way, she had no idea of it: besides, it was largely their own fault for spoiling her since their father died, when they were twelve. They had always felt at least as old as she, if not older. Even

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now, strangers mistook her for their sister. It was incredible that she should be forty-four. She had the air of thirty at most, whereas they looked every day of their twenty-six years. That was the fault of the war, too! They'd been happy children before August, 1914, it seemed in looking back.

"What shall you do after lunch, Mums?" Evelyn wanted to know. "Shall you have a look round your darling shops?—no use saying you didn't come for them, as much as anything else!—or shall you lie down and rest after the journey?"

"I'm not tired. I sha'n't waste my first afternoon lying down," retorted Lady Wandsworth, brightening now that she wasn't to be scolded. "But, even if I did 'drag' you to Vienna, I sha'n't drag you round the shops. Really I'd rather potter about by myself this afternoon. I have my own little plans. I—the fact is, I have a *wee* secret. You'd be in my way. So please trot off and amuse yourselves till time to dress for dinner."

"Will you take a walk with me in the Prater, Rod?" asked the girl.

"Yes, I'd like that," her brother answered.

She had known he would like it. Twins often do mysteriously know, as in a glass darkly, what passes in the mind and heart of the other self.

THEY left Virginia Wandsworth with her mulatto maid, the withered brown Rose who had come, twenty-seven years ago, with the girl-bride to England. Picking up a shabby horse cab in front of their hotel, the twins went rattling over the stone pavements of beautiful, tragically shabby streets, towards the loveliest Spring park in the world.

At the Praterstern, past the three-tiered boat-monument to Tegethoff, they descended, and started to walk through an endless avenue of white, candle-blossomed chestnut trees.

"This almost makes up for coming—to wander here alone with you," Rod said at last, after moments of silence, his hat off, his eyes on the green roof lit by those white candles. "If anything *could* make up!"

"Do you mind so much, old thing?" the girl asked. "But you don't need to tell me. I know you do."

"I know you do, too, Eve," answered her twin.

"Of course I mind. Oh, Rod! This time eight years ago! We were eighteen. He—Guido—was only three years older. Would you like to talk about him—here—to me? Or would you rather not?"

Rod did not speak. Eve looked up. Was it the green glimmer under the trees that paled his face so, or was it really a sick white under the sunburn that never wore off? Their eyes met, hers wistful, his (she saw) agonized. "Dearest!" she cried. "Forgive me! I didn't quite realize. I oughtn't to mention him here. I——"

"I'm glad you did," Rod cut her short. "Eve, I've *got* to tell someone. I can't stand it, keeping this to myself—any longer—I could have got along all right if we hadn't come to Vienna, but——"

"You *weren't* all right," she broke in. "Don't you think I saw? Only, I couldn't be sure what it was, and I wouldn't ask. *You* had to begin. Rod, darling, what is it that's torturing you so? Has it always been the same thing, ever since you came home—ever since the war—these four years? Or was it something different at first—and now, thoughts of Guido and how happy we were? Answer only if you want to—*only* if you want to!"

He did not answer at first. Then he said: "It was always Guido."

For once, something that her twin told her about himself surprised the girl. "I—don't understand," she almost whispered. Their eyes met again, the look of dumb anguish in his that she had wondered at, and prayed over.

"Mother says I'm haunted," he muttered. "She's often said it. Virgie doesn't usually see under the surface, but she hit the mark that time. I *am* haunted."

"Rod!" the word was a breath.

"I'm haunted by Guido."

Evelyn's face was as white as his in the green gloom. She felt that Rod longed to talk, but could not; felt, too, that he wished her to prompt him. "Why should Guido haunt you and make you unhappy?" she gently asked. "You and he were friends. We—we all loved each other. Was there something he wanted you to do for him that he couldn't tell you before he died, some secret he wanted you to know—or——?"

"No, it wasn't that. I knew his secret."

"There was—he had a secret, then?"

"My God, yes!"

At the sharpness of that low cry, Eve lost hold upon herself. "Oh, Rod, was it something about me?"

"About you?" he turned upon her. "What could it be about you?"

The girl's cheeks flamed, but she faced him. "I wish I hadn't asked you that," she said. "It seemed to ask itself. I was always ashamed to speak, but you and I are coming down to the bed-rock of things now, and neither of us need be ashamed. For a minute I hoped Guido might have told you he loved me. Because, you see, I loved him, not—*not* like a friend! And I never knew how it was with him. I was silly to think he might have spoken to you. He wouldn't—besides, you never saw him after Italy came into the war."

"I did see him. That's it. *I did see him.* God, Eve, if I'd dreamed you cared, I wouldn't have begun this. Even now I'd better not go on."

"Sit down." Her lips formed the words, though there was no sound.

"You must go on," Eve said. "Nothing you can tell me could be worse than—not knowing."

"I think it could."

"No. Go on. What secret? Why should you feel—haunted, by Guido Magnoni?"

"I killed him."

There was an empty bench under the trees close by. Eve almost fell upon it. But instantly self-control came back. "Sit down." Her lips formed the words, though there was no sound.

Rod sat stiffly beside her on the faded red-brown bench, where a few chestnut blossoms lay like great drops of scented white and pink wax from the sun-lit candles far above.

"Now," Eve whispered.

"Guido was—a spy. If you loved him—I suppose you'll hate me for killing him. I shot him with my own hand. But I saved him from worse—saved him from being found out. I saved his family from knowing—that kind American mother, who adored him so—who went to school with our Butterfly: that pretty, small sister Zita, who worshipped him. As it happened, I saved Guido's honour—the rags of it. *Do* you hate me, Eve?"

"I love you more. If you were *sure?*"

"I was quite sure."

"Tell me it all—the whole story—what happened."

"Can you bear it?"

"Yes. I can guess part. It must have been after Caporeto, of course, when they rushed the British and French to the Italian front to help, and you went. You never wrote that you saw Guido. You never wrote at all, for a long, long time, I remember. We were dreadfully anxious."

"I couldn't write—with this thing in my heart. For a while I was like a dead man. I'd—loved Guido."

"You and I always love the same people! We do the same things. *I'd* have killed him in your place!"

"You would? Thank you for saying that."

"Virgie and I got the idea that Guido had been killed before you came—killed at the time of the great disaster itself."

"I wanted you to get that idea. Well, it happened two nights after we met. I was wild with joy to see him at first. Yet—I had the

feeling he wasn't pleased that I'd turned up. Something was wrong. It hurt."

"You didn't suspect?"

"Great heavens, no! We all knew there'd been treachery. But Guido—I'd as soon have thought of myself as a traitor. Of course, the Magnonis were Austrian once, and the title was originally Austrian, Italianized after the old patriot, Josef Magnoni, fought in the '47 revolution—all those years ago. Guido seemed a loyal Italian. You remember how he used to talk when we first came to Venice, when Signora Magnoni called on mother—and made us move from Daniello's to her palazzo?"

"Ah, *do* I remember? Guido was on leave. He was so beautiful in his uniform! It was then I fell in love—only a kid's love, I suppose. But it's lasted—all these years. Till now! Till now; for I won't love a spy."

"Even in those days, though he was so young, he must have gone over to the other side. I've tried since to find some excuse. The old family traditions must have bewitched him. He must have got some microbe into his brain. He could not have done what he did for money's sake. Besides, the Magnonis had money enough before the war, though they may be poor now. You remember, he loved the old Castle at Schönbrunn better than the little palazzo at Venice. You know it was he who asked his mother to lend us Schloss Waldstern and proposed to bring us himself. No reason why he *shouldn't* come—why the whole family shouldn't come, every year, when Austria and Italy were at peace—allies! But I've thought since, he might have had other reasons for bringing us. It was May, 1914. Things were simmering. Probably he knew what was up. That's all guesswork, though. It isn't in the story of what happened after Caporeto. We were fighting together in a confused retreat. Guido's belt fell off. He *meant* it to fall, and the Austrians to get it when they came along, as they were bound to come soon, the way things were with us just then. But I picked it up There was a secret hiding-place inside. A bit of paper slipped out. Writing was on it—in German—Guido's writing. Words started to my eyes. Any fool could understand. Things were hot round us. Nobody saw me shoot him. It was done in a flash. But there was just time for our eyes to meet—and he knew—as he died. That's all. Except that, when I got the chance, I tore the bit of paper into a hundred bits. Oh, Eve, it's all out now! The relief! But if I'd dreamed that you——"

"Thank God you didn't dream. And *I* won't dream any more. Guido—a spy! But I'm glad you—saved him, Rod."

"That's what you call it—*saved* him?"

"Yes, of course. You killed, to save."

"Not altogether, I'm afraid. I thought of that more afterwards. I hated him for a minute. The thought of him made me sick—as if I'd touched a snake. I just—shot. Of course I had no right, even if I'd done it for his sake. He was a traitor. He deserved——"

"Never mind. He died. Death must be an atonement in itself, for a man like Guido—young, handsome, loving life. Oh, he must have thanked you the instant his soul left his body and could repent—could understand. He *doesn't* want to harm and torture you, Rod, believe me. If his spirit comes, it comes in gratitude."

Rod drew a sharp breath. "You're the best girl—the best sister on earth, Eve," he said, brokenly.

"The best girl till you meet the right one—someone else's sister!" His twin tried to laugh, and lead him to lighter thoughts.

"I hope to God I'll never fall in love!" Rod cried out. "I feel I haven't a right to marry——"

"I think that's rather a morbid view," Eve soothed him. "So many men had to kill heaps of other men in the war. This—when one looks at it—wasn't very different."

"You're a brick of bricks, Eve! There's no praise enough for the help you give," Rod rewarded her. "All the same, I'll keep away from girls—except you. I have kept away—*ever since*, if you've noticed."

"Oh, I've *noticed!* My poor Rod. What you've gone through! But it will be easier now when you've spoken out, and have got me to talk to. I see how you felt about coming back to Vienna where we were all three together, and it was—such fun."

"Well, coming back *was* rather the limit! But one has to stand things—especially when one deserves punishment. And a thousand times a day I feel I do."

"Well, *don't* feel it! Now, old thing, let's put this out of our minds for awhile. Let's take long breaths, and think of the present and future. Shall we walk on?"

II.

DINNER was to be at eight, and it was only half-past six when Rod flung open the door of their sitting-room at the Bristol. Neither he nor Eve had expected Virginia to be back. But the sound of voices rushed to them, as if borne on a wave of perfume—perfume of lilacs and lilies of the valley. Lady Wandsworth was talking at the top of her voice, the voice of another woman joining in.

It was too late for the new-comers to retire, as they had the impulse to do. They had been seen. Supposing that their mother had discovered English or American acquaintances in the hotel, the twins prepared to be polite. But almost on the threshold they stopped, as if struck a blow over the heart. The Contessa Magnoni, in deep mourning, much changed yet recognizable, rose from a sofa to greet them. A girl dressed also in black sprang up from a low

chair—an adorable girl. If she had not been with the elder woman, they would never have guessed who she was Now they knew only too well. The little Zita, who had worshipped Guido! Little Zita, magically transformed from a thin, shyly awkward child of nine to ten, to nymphlike eighteen.

There are things that can't happen, that simply aren't done! This was one of them. How could Virginia have sprung such a surprise, knowing that Rod had refused to stop even an hour in Venice unless she promised not to communicate with the Magnonis, believed to be there in their palazzo? It was cruel of her. If they—Rod and Eve—had dreamed that Guido's mother and sister might have given up Venice for Vienna, they would have suspected what the sly allusion to a " little secret " meant. But there had seemed no reason to suspect. The Magnonis were Italian. They made their home in Venice. When they lent Schloss Waldstern to the Wandsworths and Guido brought the three to Vienna, the quaint old castle had been in charge of a caretaker. Yet Virginia must somehow have known of the change. For a few seconds the twins—their hearts full of that talk under the chestnut trees—almost hated their spoiled child of a mother.

" Isn't this just *too* nice? " chirped Virginia. " Come along, children, don't behave like pillars of salt! *Now* you know the reason why I was so firm—you called it obstinate!—about Vienna. I wrote the hotel people in Venice to inquire about this dear family. And I didn't say a word to you, Rod and Eve, because I knew you felt timid. You were afraid these darlings would be overcome by sad memories, and not want to meet us. I was *sure* you were wrong! Still, I wouldn't write them when I heard they'd come to Vienna to live. I loathe cold black and white. I bided my time; and the minute your backs were turned this afternoon, I took an auto and *flew* to the Schloss. I sent in my card. If dear Helena and Zita hadn't wished to see me, they could have been ' not at home.' But——"

" Of course we wanted to see her—and all of you! " the tall, crape-clad woman broke in. " No one in the world we want to see more. You share our memories." She held out one black-gloved hand to Eve, another to Rod. The brother and sister had to take and clasp them. Her face wrung their hearts, so ravaged it was, so aged, so drained of blood by grief. Who would believe, seeing them together, that this elderly woman, with grey hair and skin waxen-sallow, was only two or three years older than Lady Wandsworth? The two were of quite opposite types, one of Massachusetts, the other of Virginia, but they had been together at school in New York, and the meeting in Venice after many years had pleased the New England woman as much as it had charmed the woman of the South. The Contessa Magnoni had always been quiet, reserved as to her inner feelings, though her great eyes betrayed them. Now she looked somehow *fatal*. The loss of her adored son had killed the woman she once had been.

The brother and sister stumbled through a greeting. Their embarrassment passed for surprise: and hardly had they saluted Signora Magnoni than they were snatched away by Virgie to meet the wonderful new Zita.

THE girl was as tall as her mother, but in her the sad woman's angularity was translated into sylphlike slimness. The queer little imp, peering out between curtains of straight, tow-coloured hair, had blossomed into the most radiant vision of girlhood Rodney Wandsworth had ever seen. He was dazzled by her—the brilliance of her blush, pure rose; the whiteness of her skin, pure mother o' pearl; the glint of her hair, no longer resembling tow, but bright as an amalgam of gold and silver, under the hard brim of a plain black hat. The girl's neck was slender and sweet, like a child's, and Rod was ashamed of the impulse to clasp his hands round it, to see how brown they were against that satin whiteness. Zita's ancestors on her father's side had been Italian for generations, yet she had one characteristic peculiarly Austrian—dark brows and lashes contrasting with pale gold hair. Her eyes were dark, too, but greenish-grey, not black, with sensitively dilated pupils. She bore no likeness to Guido, and Rod was suddenly glad. The beauty of Guido's sister was nothing to him, he reminded himself, yet he was glad she was not like her brother.

Rod would have avoided touching Zita Magnoni's ungloved fingers if he could, for a dreadful picture flashed to his mind: that same hand of his clutching a pistol. But she held hers out, as her mother had done. He had to take it. They'd been great friends in Venice. The child had sat on his knee. Two or three times she had fallen asleep in his arms. The remembrance shot through the man with a thrill.

" You used to tell me stories about Italian history, because I was such a patriot," Zita reminded him, with a slight smile that dented a dimple in each cheek. Of course, she had always had those dimples, but how different they seemed now! " Guido said I was a troublesome little thing, but he didn't mean it, really. He told me stories, too, about our dear Italy." Tears welled in her eyes and, though she smiled, one bright drop fell swiftly down each cheek. Her lips trembled like a child's, but she pressed them together, and controlled herself like a woman.

At that instant an immense desire to seize her in his arms overwhelmed Rod. " Nothing to him? " Why, she was everything! Though he had known her for eight years, this was the

first time he had really seen her. He had thought that talk of love at first sight was nonsense, yet now he knew it was the only kind of love a man with red blood in his veins could feel for a girl like Zita Magnoni. It was impossible to understand how any man could look at her and not love her. He felt bitterly jealous of all men. Not one but had a better right to think of this girl than he.

For one moment the new emotion had been so overpowering that he forgot Guido. But only for a moment. Suddenly an ice-cold wind seemed to blow through the pleasant *salon*, full of lilies and lilacs. It brought Guido into the room. Guido stood between his sister and his slayer, with the look in his eyes that Rod saw always before he fell asleep at night—the look with which Guido had died.

"I fetched these two dear things back to dine with us. Isn't it lovely? And see all the flowers they've given us from their garden. Isn't it like old times—except for this big girl?" chattered Virginia. "History *does* repeat itself! You remember, Eve and Rod, how Helena *would* make us leave Daniello's to stay with them at the palazzo? Well, we're going to stay with them at Schloss Waldstern all the time we are in Vienna—and maybe we'll be here longer than we expected. Who knows?"

Rod and Eve's glances met, dark with horror at the situation.

"Mother, we can't possibly trouble the Contessa Magnoni," the young man protested, almost pleaded. "We've engaged our suite here, and——"

"That's nothing!" exclaimed Virgie. "If it *were* troubling her, of course I wouldn't. Everything's so different since the war! I know the difficulty of getting servants and all that; but——"

"So far from being a trouble, it will be not only a pleasure but a help to us, to have you," explained the Contessa, with a kind of proud humility. "We're so poor now, Zita and I. Nobody out of Austria can imagine how poor! Nearly all our money is gone. We've let our little palazzo at Venice to some Americans, and we contrive to live on the rent! We were obliged to come to Schloss Waldstern, though Zita is too intensely Italian to love it. The place was eating its head off. Besides, we had nowhere else to go, and Italian liras make many kronen these days. We have advertised in the *New York Herald* and several other papers for paying guests here. I thought you might have happened to notice the advertisement. But so far we've had no answers. I suppose people are afraid of starving in old castles in Austria since the war. You'll be our first guests, and we'll not *quite* starve you, I promise."

"Perhaps you'll bring us luck," said Zita. "I feel you will! We need it!" She smiled with wistful appeal at Evelyn and Rodney Wandsworth. "Oh, it will be splendid to have you!" she cried—and unconsciously her brightening look was more for Rod than Eve. "We've been so lonely, Mama mia and I! You see, we've never lived here more than a few months of any year, and this is the first time we've come since before the war. We're Italians with our whole hearts, not Austrians, and people feel that, of course."

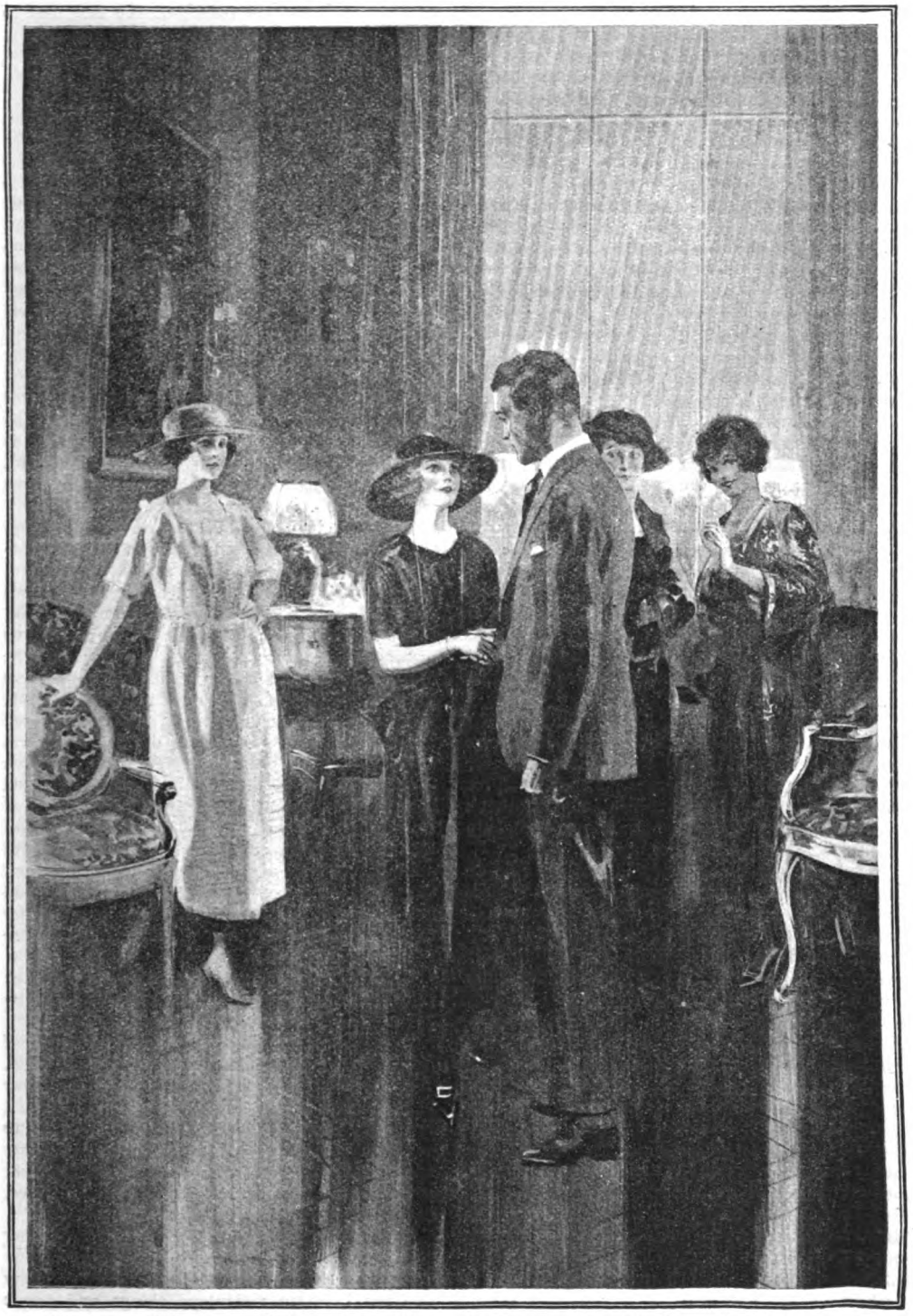
NEVER until this moment, perhaps, had Rod known what it was to be utterly desperate. Even an animal at bay had more chance, he felt dimly, because an animal can fight. He couldn't fight. The worst situations in which he'd found himself had shown some way out. But here he could see no way that he could take without brutality. These two delicately-bred women were in distress. They needed the money which he would gladly give. They were almost happy, because luck seemed to have turned for them at last. How could he wound them with a "No, we won't live at your house. We're going away from Vienna at once. You mustn't count on us"?

Of course, there was an alternative. He could allow his mother and sister to be the Magnonis' paying guests. For himself, he could make some excuse. He could explain that he'd decided to travel, or that he'd been recalled suddenly to England. But—Zita and her mother would understand that he was lying to escape from them. The two lonely creatures would be deeply pained—and just after Zita had said that the visit would be "splendid"—said it looking straight at him! No, he couldn't hurt her like that; the darling, the sweet one!

Trapped, he glanced wildly at Eve for help. She gave back look for look, but help she had none to give. It was clear that, like him, she saw no decent way out of the *impasse* into which Virginia had led them with her "little secret." Eve's eyes seemed to say: "There's nothing to do now; but by and by we may think of some plan."

Rod, who read her thoughts as easily as she read his, guessed that Eve hoped he would raise no objection; that later she would aid him to "make a scene" with Virginia; that rather than offend the Magnonis they might get an urgent "telegram from home."

It seemed cowardly to acquiesce, and deep in his heart Rod knew that, if Zita hadn't been what she was, he would not have postponed the inevitable. Sooner than trust to chance, he would even have been brutal. But it was as if the girl had woven round him a chain of flowers from her garden at Schloss Waldstern. It was sweet with the perfume of all romance, sweeter than anything he had ever known. When Zita had gone with her mother out of his sight he would break the chain, because it must be broken. But not now. Not quite yet.



Rod would have avoided touching Zita's fingers if he could, for a dreadful picture flashed to his mind: that same hand of his clutching a pistol.

III.

AT dinner the chain was welded more tightly than before.

Virginia had the meal served in their own sitting-room, as the Contessa and her daughter were still in black for Guido. The table was decorated with the lilac and lilies of the valley from Schloss Waldstern. Lady Wandsworth insisted that everyone should drink champagne—"Good luck and happiness to our new-found friends!"—and the scent of the flowers, if not the sparkle of the wine, went to Rod's head. Zita had never tasted champagne. She drank a little, and blossomed like a rose. It brought a queer tightness to Rod's throat, to see how like a daintily greedy child she enjoyed the elaborate *hors d'œuvres*, the *bisque d'écrivisse*, the trout, the grilled spring chicken, the pink ice with creamy cakes, and the strawberries which Virginia ordered.

"Oh, Mama mia, I didn't know there were such lovely things to eat in the world!" the girl cried, clapping her hands of a child; then blushed at the shamed look on her mother's face.

The best thing was to laugh, so everyone did laugh, but the Contessa reminded her friends that Zita had grown up in the lean war years. "She has forgotten the little luxuries we used to have. But, indeed, this is a great feast to us both. I am frightened to have you at Waldstern. We shall never be able to feed you like this."

Talking all together, the Wandsworths assured her that it was a feast for them as well, a special feast to celebrate the reunion; simple food and not too much was what they liked for every day. But Zita's blush, her mother's distress, wove a few more strands of the chain that was making a prisoner of Rod.

He saw that now he would not be able to excuse himself from joining the party at Schloss Waldstern, unless he wished the Magnonis to suppose he despised their *ménage*. "They'll think me a pig as well as a brute!" he told himself. "I can't stand that. Must fag up some other way out."

Before it was time for the Magnonis to leave, Lady Wandsworth and the Contessa arranged that the "paying guests" should arrive at Waldstern in time for afternoon coffee in the garden. "We shall have lots of things to do, because we want to make you very, very comfortable, you're paying so much; you'd better not come till after lunch," Zita confessed with her embarrassing frankness.

"Paying so much!" It was true that, in the depressed Austrian kronen, the price of pension agreed upon between the elder ladies "sounded like all the money in the world," as Zita said; but in English money it was not fifteen shillings a day each. The Signora refused to accept more, though the Wandsworths were to have two sitting-rooms and such an old-fashioned bath as the Schloss could provide. To her and to Zita, after all they had endured, the money seemed a fortune. If only their guests would stay even a month!

ROD had meant to send the Magnonis home in a taxi, but his mother proposed that he should go with them. He was shocked at the rush of joy he felt. He ought to have shrunk from the thought of a drive through the warm May evening with these two women who would have loathed him if they knew the truth. But he could not turn off the rush of joy, the surge of his youth, to order, as one turns water off from a tap. He felt guiltily, defiantly young and happy, as if he were like other men, laughing with Zita in the open car, as the moonlight sprayed through the trees like a fountain of silver. It was only on the way home that he faced realities again—his realities. Then it seemed that facing him in the taxi where Zita and her mother had sat was a blot of dark shadow, like the shadow of a man.

"I hope I'm not going mad on top of everything else," Rod said to himself, as he had sometimes said before.

Eve was waiting for him, as he had known she would be. He had longed for her boyishly, resting upon his hope that she would have some inspirational advice to give. But for once he had counted upon her in vain. "You'll have to go through with it, Rod," she said. "Oh, I understand how you feel! You're thinking: 'If they *knew!*' But they don't know, and never will. The only one to suffer will be you—and you're used to suffering by this time, old thing! You simply can't get out of the tangle! Those poor, poor things—the Contessa and Zita! I wish we could pay them thousands of pounds instead of a few thousand shillings. Why, even if it was only because of money, and not a question of their feelings, you'd *have* to stick this, Rod! It's pitiful. Did you see their dresses—their *hats?*"

"They looked all right to me; just black things," answered Rod, his eyes dazzled by Zita's beauty.

"The 'black things' are five years old if they're a day—the first mourning for Guido. They're so old-fashioned that soon they'll come into fashion again—by *force majeure!*" said Eve, half laughing, half crying. "I hope to goodness they'll be able to buy some new things with our money. A young girl like Zita ought to be out of mourning long ago. You see, don't you, Rod, that this *settles* it for you?"

"What, their hats and dresses?" her brother stumbled.

"Oh—well, *yes*, in a way! There's just a tiny division between ridiculous things and tragic things. It actually *was* their dresses and hats that made me see we've got to rally round the Magnonis with money and help, especially as

if it hadn't been for—for *us*, they wouldn't be alone and unprotected——"

"If it hadn't been for me, you mean!" Rod amended, bitterly.

"You and I are almost one. I do feel so, often. I get your point of view—though now and then I come back to my own. I can see Zita, for instance, as *you* can, more than from a girl's standpoint. I'd like to protect her, and give her lovely clothes! Can you imagine her doing the things I did in the war—driving motor lorries all over the place, shouting 'damn' when I felt like it, and smoking like a chimney?"

"No, I can't. You're a product of the war. You're modern—only you're not hard like lots of girls. She—Zita—is old-fashioned. She's never been out in the world. Yet I think——"

"You think——"

"I hardly know. She's like a flower. But a flower growing in granite rock. That's the only way I know how to express what I think—it's so vague; a sort of fragility, and—latent firmness."

Eve glanced at Rod, her eyes lingering on his face, half turned away. It occurred to her that he'd been scarcely conscious of her question. He had answered a mental question of his own. "Rod!" she broke out, impulsively, then stopped and bit her lip.

"What were you going to say?" he asked. His tone was sharp.

"Nothing," Eve breathed.

NEXT day the Wandsworths drove to Schloss Waldstern in three pre-war taxis, Virginia's maid and much smart luggage occupying two of the worse-for-wear vehicles.

The old castle, "Star of the Forest," was a small estate, once an adjunct of the royal park at Schönbrunn. Two centuries ago it had been given to a Count Magnoni who had done some private (and secret) service for his sovereign; and even though the Magnonis had "gone over" to Italy in 1847, for a reason unknown, the property was not confiscated. A generation after the great fight for independence, the Count Magnoni of the day, no longer Austrian but an Italian subject, returned to the little castle in the woods. Following his time, all the Magnonis had spent a month or more out of every winter in Vienna—welcomed in later years as "allies"—until the world war broke the alliance and the Magnoni fortunes as well.

Rodney Wandsworth and Eve were silent as their car entered the gateway in the high wall. Just as they had come eight years ago—they two and Virginia! So entirely the same looked the ancient building that for an instant Eve and Rod were eighteen again. But only the castle and the blossoming trees were the same. Everything else, like themselves, was changed. And there was no Guido.

The lawns surrounding the Schloss, once smooth as emerald plush, were neglected, the grass weed-grown and full of clover. The formal flower-beds had lost shape. The gravel was gone from the paths, or covered with moss. The place might have been the palace of the Sleeping Beauty of the Wood, in the midst of its hundred lost years. The beat of motors was an impertinence in this haunt of slumber, until suddenly it woke with a glint of sun on a girl's bright head. Beauty wasn't asleep after all! She was awake, and waiting for life to find her. Zita dashed out of a quaint summer house hollowed from a group of arbor vitæ, and ran to meet the visitors, followed by her mother.

There were greetings, and an old, old man was summoned to help the chauffeurs with the luggage. He and his wife had been caretakers when Guido brought the Wandsworths eight years ago. Now he was gardener and butler as well; and his wife, as Zita laughingly explained, was cook and house-parlour-maid. "But Mama and I are the housekeepers," she added. "We do everything so well, you wouldn't believe the Schloss wasn't swarming with servants."

When they had had coffee and marvellous little cakes, served with fine old silver and Dresden, under the green arbor vitæ dome, Zita asked Rod if he'd "care to go round the garden while Mama mia showed the ladies to their suite." She offered her company as a child might have offered it, with no self-consciousness; but Virgie's eyes twinkled and she looked away from her old schoolmate, lest Helena should see the laugh in them. Lady Wandsworth knew enough of Italian and Austrian customs to be sure that the girl would never have dared to give such an invitation if she hadn't been "put up to it."

"Poor darling Helena, setting her cap for Rod!" Virginia inwardly chuckled. "Well, why not? It would be fun—a real romance."

Helena's quiet dignity began to amuse Lady Wandsworth. It was too funny to think what it hid! She could imagine how the great idea had sprung into Helena's mind last night, seeing Rod and Zita together at dinner. Once it had lodged there, how the girl's mother must have rejoiced over the "paying guest" arrangement, which would throw the two into each other's society perhaps for weeks! Where money was concerned, it would be almost a case of King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid, if the affair came off, for Helena had confided to Virginia that, besides Schloss Waldstern (Zita's now, but lapsing to Government after her death), the rent of the Venetian palazzo, and a few valuables which could not be sold, they had nothing left. The Magnonis, however, possessed enough quarterings for the Austrian

Zita ran to meet by her

Court of pre-war days, and, as Rod had plenty of money, it seemed to Virgie that this beautiful child would be quite a suitable wife. She didn't particularly yearn to be made a dowager, but dear, grumpy old Rod would have to marry, and Zita would be a sweet little daughter-in-law, a hundred times more congenial than some steely-eyed flapper, out for what she could get. Besides, there were two or three men who wanted to marry Virginia Wandsworth. She could have a brand-new title of her own, if she liked.

Guido walked again between his sister and the man who had killed him, as Zita led her companion through the green-walled alleys, from garden to garden. But Rod was at bay. The time had come when he had to break the spell, or be broken by it. He could not stand that haunting sense of a presence, if he had to pass weeks—or even days—at Schloss Waldstern. He knew that, if he couldn't throw it off, the horror would come upon him which now and then for a hideous moment he had feared. Something in his brain would snap! The strain of living in this house with Guido's people would be greater than any he had borne yet. With a violent effort he struggled to put the shadow behind him. His mind, his common sense, fought with his sick nerves and won over them.

The shadow would creep back, darker than ever and nearer perhaps, but for the moment he felt fiercely vital and full of a wild gaiety, as he had felt last night, after champagne and in the moonlight. He and Zita laughed at the queer little pottery dwarfs, imported from Germany, in the flower-beds, and peered at their own distorted reflections in big silver globes that mirrored the landscape.

"Now I'll take you into the house," Zita said at last. "Did Mama tell you which room she's giving you for your own sitting-room, Sir Rodney?"

"No, she didn't," he answered. "But look here! Eight years ago you called me Rod!"

"Ah, but I was only ten years old."

"Does that make much difference? There are just the same number of years between us now. I can't take any interest in what you tell me about the room if I have to be 'Sir Rodney' for you."

"Very well, Rod, then! But you will take an interest, because the room is very interesting. It's called the 'Count's study,' because the head of the house always used it. There's another name, though; maybe Guido told you?"

"No." (Always that name was a stab. But

Rod hardened himself. It was the only way. Fate had pitched him into this damned scrape. He hadn't walked in of his own accord. Fate had got to see him through.)

"It's called 'the room of the secret.' There's a story about it, of course—that there's some secret the heir must learn in that room when he's twenty-one. If his father or the reigning Count is alive, *he* tells it. If not, the heir finds a letter waiting for him in the safe, and reads it on his twenty-first birthday. He is given the key of the safe only if the Count dies. Whether the story is true or not, I don't know. None of the women of the family is supposed to know, yet I believe Mama does—by the way she looks when I've teased her about it! At least, there *is* a safe. It's behind the strange picture of an old man and a young man painted on a panel of the wall. You must have seen it when you were here, because Guido used the study then. Even when he was a boy it was his."

"He never took me into his study," Rod assured her, heavily.

"Didn't he? That's strange, because he was proud of the room. But maybe some house-cleaning or repairs may have been going on. Isn't it a thrilling story, though it's only a legend?"

"There's the same sort of rumour about one or two old castles in England and Scotland," Rod said. "Probably they're all nonsense."

"I wonder? If *ours* is true, Guido must have known the secret. He must have known it when you came eight years ago, because his twenty-first birthday was before you arrived in Venice. We had quite a *fête*, a moonlight picnic on the lagoon, with our gondolas lit up, and a soprano from the Opera singing. It was the last gay thing that ever happened to us."

"Poor child!" Rod did not mean to utter the words aloud, but to his own surprise they tumbled out. He flushed, and tried to keep what he felt from showing in his eyes as they

the visitors, followed mother.

met Zita's wistful through a veil of unshed tears.

"Don't pity me! It makes me cry," the girl laughed, tremulously. "I can be brave as a lion except when I'm pitied. Then I remember how sorry I am for myself, and for darling Mama, too. Still, *she* has her memories. I've nothing—nothing that other girls of my age have. I wouldn't mind so much if there were any future. But there's no hope for us. Oh, don't let's talk of it. I'm silly! It's just the excitement of having you come that's stirred up all my feelings and wishes." Angrily she dashed away a few tears with one of those little, childish hands that seemed to twist something in Rodney Wandsworth's breast. "We were speaking about the Count's study. Mama thought you'd like it because it was Guido's."

"It's too sacred. I—I'd rather *not* have it, please," Rod stammered. "I don't need a sitting-room for myself. I—may not be here long, and——"

"Oh, you will go away soon?" the girl cut him short. Her colour faded. She looked sick with disappointment. "But I might have known. Even Mama said last night how good of you it was to come at all. This is no place for a young man to be amused in, these days. We only hoped, if we tried very hard——"

"Of course, I shall stop as long as the others do," Rod broke in, desperately. "I hope they'll stay weeks—months. When I said I mightn't be here long, I meant comparatively; not long enough to need a room to work in. It's a beautiful place to live and an honour to us that you'll have us with you."

Zita brightened at once, though, suddenly relieved of fear, she insisted that Sir Rodney—no, Rod!—mustn't bore himself to please her and Mama. She had not quite realized how selfish she was!

They went through the wide-open front door of the little castle, and passed through beautiful rooms with panelled or quaintly frescoed walls, floors of elaborate parquet or pinkish grey stone. Rod remembered these rooms, and noted, with a pang, how many admired ornaments were gone; Persian rugs, treasured pictures, bits of rare old Dresden and majolica. He hardly knew how to endure his pity and his love. He wanted to do everything in the world for this adorable child who had no hope for the future—he, the one man of all others who could do nothing; he, to whom she was the flower forbidden!

IV.

IN whatever direction he turned at Schloss Waldstern, it seemed to Rod that he stumbled against some high wall that gave him no way out. None of the things he ought to do, things he was bound in honour to do, could be done for fear of cruelly wounding Zita and her mother. He was not even allowed to refuse Guido's study as a private sitting-room, though to him it would be a private hell.

Rod had heard superstitious people talk of places that "held an influence," unseen but real to them as a visible presence, and though, before his own tragedy, he would have dismissed such misgivings as "rot," he expected to experience acutely in this room the sense of being haunted by Guido Magnoni. In his state of nervous exaltation he would scarcely have been surprised if Guido's spirit had materialized to confront him as the door closed.

Strangely, however, he got no impression of Guido's resentment. Guido was there, yes, certainly there, if the spirit of man survived beyond bodily death; but there was a queer sense that, for once, Guido was not reproaching him. And Guido's ghost was not alone. There were others in this room that Zita had called "the room of the secret," sad ghosts whose presence brought a chill, like the faint mist that hovers above a pool in autumn twilight.

Rod did not hate the room as he had expected to hate it. The spirit of sadness brooding there was not repellent, rather was it strangely welcoming. It wanted to tell him something. There was something here he ought to know.

This was the impression the "Count's study" gave to Rod's mind, and though common sense said that all was in *himself*, not in the place, still he did not try to rid his brain of it. Standing in the middle of the room he glanced round with waiting interest and listened to a kind of echo.

The ceiling was arched, and decorated with faded scenes from Magnoni ancestral history. There were a number of ancient and extremely German-looking bookcases, with yellowed marble busts on top, but the only picture was the one of which Zita had spoken.

Eight years ago this had been, it seemed, Guido's special sanctum, yet it must have been the only room in the house into which Guido had not invited his friends, the Wandsworths. He had told, with evident pride, a number of stories about his Austrian forbears, but had kept silence as to the legend of the secret. Rod was sure that this was not because Guido had forgotten. Guido never forgot anything.

The echo in this room was a mere effect of outside sounds—a rising wind among the trees, the distant barking of a dog—flung against stone walls and floor and high, arched ceiling through open windows; yet it was as if the ghosts of the place, Guido's among them, whispered: "Look at the picture."

Rod crossed the room and gazed at it.

The painter had been no great artist. The idea came into Rod's head that he might have been an amateur, a member of the Magnoni family. But—if there were a secret belonging to the room, this man had known it, had made it astonishingly vital and somehow important.

Was he doing a portrait of himself, and portraying a thing that had happened to him? Rod wondered.

The picture, painted on wood, represented two men gazing at each other across a table. The form of one—the man in the background—was seen mistily. Only his features were clear, and the shape of his domelike head, sparsely covered with grizzled hair. His deep-set black eyes were brilliant in a face of grey pallor, and seemed to hold the younger man hypnotized, perhaps horrified. The latter showed only his profile, and gave the impression of extreme youth. His slim figure also, though well in the foreground, was slightly indistinct. He wore a uniform of some sort, though of what period, or what country, it was impossible to be sure.

"What does the thing mean?" Rod asked himself, deeply intrigued in what, he felt, was meant to be a problem for the uninitiated. "Is one man telling the secret to the other? If that's so, which is it who tells, which one listens? It might be either. Perhaps the picture has nothing to do with the secret—if there is a secret. And yet—one feels that the man who painted this thing was *impelled* to paint it. He had the picture in his mind. He was haunted by it just as I'm haunted by Guido. The fellow hoped to get rid of his—obsession by putting it into paint on wood. God! I wonder if he succeeded?"

Suddenly, as his eyes questioned the picture, he caught in the profile of the youth a likeness to Guido, as Guido had looked when he was twenty-one. Yet the picture was very old—no one seemed to know quite how old, Zita had said. So it could be only a coincidence, or a slight suggestion of family likeness, if the profile were a portrait of some long-dead Magnoni.

"Whoever he was, the poor boy suffered," Rod said half aloud. And in the faint echo with which the stone walls and domed ceiling gave back each sound, it was as if a voice answered, whispering close to Rod's ear, "So did I suffer."

It was Guido's voice, but Rod did not even start. He was too wearily used to fancying that he heard Guido Magnoni's voice and saw Guido Magnoni's face!

He turned away from the panel, and the first object his glance fell upon was a small, old refectory table of black oak which occupied the centre of the room. On this table, among a few paper-covered books—evidently new, and bought for him—was a bowl of blood-red roses. But at first it was neither the books nor the roses which caught Rod's attention with a spark of curiosity. It was the table itself. For it was the facsimile of the table across which the two men in the picture leaned and talked.

One of the paper-covered books was Tennyson's "Maud," translated into German. A queer thrill went through Rod at sight of that poem, and the thought that perhaps Zita—not dreaming of a certain horrible appropriateness—had chosen it to please him. Mechanically he picked up the volume, whose leaves had been neatly cut, and opened it at random.

"What matter if I go mad
So I have had my day?"

he read. Then, lifting his head, he repeated the words. "I'll *have* my day!" he added, and bent to breathe the scent of the roses which Zita had gathered for him.

A FEW days passed. Virginia might have been bored if the Contessa had not taken her to the smart Vienna shops, where fine furs, beautifully designed jewellery, and gorgeous things in leather could be bought for "next to nothing." She induced her old friend to drive with her in an automobile she hired by the week; and after this first break in the monotony of mourning years, Helen consented "for the children's sake" to go to concerts, the Opera, and even some of the successful plays. Then it came out that the twins' twenty-sixth birthday was on the 29th of May, the day of Zita's *fête*—she would be eighteen. What a coincidence! The Contessa's reserve was forgotten. She became quite girlish in her surprise and pleasure. One would have thought the accident that these three souls had taken flesh on the same day of the year, eight years apart, a miracle! There must be, Helena insisted, a celebration in honour of the birthday.

More than five years had passed since Guido's death on the field of honour. Though she would mourn for him ever in her heart, it was right that on such a day Zita should come out of her seclusion. Did Virginia think that Rod and Eve would enjoy a little dance—only half-a-dozen young people, pretty girls and nice boys of noble families?

Virgie's quick mind projected itself into that of the other woman. She saw, as Helena saw, the opportunities a dance would give Zita. "Have a little party by all means," she agreed; whereupon began a friendly tussle over expenses. Eventually Virginia conquered; that went without saying. The entertainment was to be her "treat," and her birthday gift to Zita would be everything complete for the dance; yes, silver shoes, silk stockings, "undies," as well as a dress of white chiffon and silver gauze. Eve would give a trifle of jewellery. As for Rod, he must be allowed to choose. He had good taste, and would not, Virgie promised, ask the child to accept anything her mother wouldn't wish her to accept from a man. Even as she made this discreet remark, however, Lady Wandsworth laughed impishly within. She knew that, with the preface of a few words (there need be only four, "Will you marry me?"), there

was nothing which Helena wouldn't thankfully allow her girl to accept. Virgie was intrigued by Rod's apparent coldness where Zita was concerned. It seemed to her that the child should have taken him by storm—so beautiful, so unspoiled, so pathetic and innocent a Cinderella she was!

Rod, a bad sleeper since the first days of his calvary, was in the habit of waking at unearthly hours. Sometimes at Schloss Waldstern he would get up at half-past five or six, have a cold splash, and write a letter or two for the post, as an excuse for an early walk. Between his bedroom and the study several rooms intervened, for the little château was planned in the old-fashioned, inconvenient way of castles, with many communicating *salons*.

On the morning of the 29th it was just on six o'clock as he opened the door of the "Salzburg Salon," next the "Count's study," and stopped with a shock of surprise before an unexpected tableau: Zita, down on her knees, apparently scrubbing the floor.

The girl's pink print frock was rolled up, and tucked firmly round her waist. She was not scrubbing, but was busily engaged in washing the parquet. She had worked so strenuously that several of the shell pins with which she fastened her hair had fallen out. One great soft braid, ending in a curl, hung over her young bosom, and as she moved the pale yellow curl brushed the floor like a dangling golden tassel.

This room was to be used for the dance to-night, Rod had been told, but it went to his heart to see Zita, his *princesse lointaine*, looking like a lodging-house slavey. It was all he could do not to spring forward and snatch her up in his arms, but it would embarrass the girl to be caught at her task, and he would have effaced himself if she had not suddenly lifted her head.

Zita had heard the opening door, and was ready with a smile to greet her parent. At sight of Rod, however, she gave a little horrified cry. Not that she was ashamed of her work. Italians are utterly devoid of snobbishness, but she knew instinctively that it would pain Rod. "Oh, I never dreamed you'd get up at this hour!" she exclaimed, scrambling to her feet in a hurry, like a child trapped at some mischief. "That's why I——"

But her foot slipped on the floor, which she had waxed to extra high polish. She struggled to regain her balance, failed, and would have fallen flat on the parquet had not Rod sprung to the rescue. He was just in time to fling an arm round the girl, and to have her clutch at him for support. She landed with her head on his shoulder, her face close to his, her breath on his cheek. That soft, loosened hair of hers had a faint intoxicating fragrance, it seemed to the man—like lilies of the valley. She looked up at him, laughing and blushing, her red lips apart; and the next thing Rod knew he had kissed her, her forehead, her cheeks, her mouth. He adored her. He worshipped her. There was no one else in the world. But—yes, there was her mother!

"Sir Rodney!" shrilled the Contessa's voice. It was less a challenge than an appeal.

Zita stiffened herself in his arms, but Rod would not let her go. His arm clasping the girl, her hair scattered over his breast, they stood close together. Helena had just entered by the door which Rod had left open.

"What has happened?" she questioned.

The realization of what *had* happened was a douche of ice for Rod.

"Contessa—I love her—I adore her!" he stammered. "But I didn't mean—I have no right——"

"I *give* you the right, if you love my daughter and she loves you," Helena broke in, quickly, such a light in her eyes as comes when a desperate prayer has been answered.

"Oh, I do *like* him!" cried Zita. "He is my fairy prince. I was only afraid he would never care—like this."

Rod had never loved life so dearly, or—so ardently wished for death. If only he could have died at that instant, and saved his honour, with the memory of that kiss to take with him!

"I'm not worthy." He fought against the tide of fate. "Contessa, I must not! I dare not——"

Helena paled. "Speak frankly," she said, her voice suddenly sharp. "If you do not wish to marry Zita, say so now. Only do not make excuses, do not trifle. If you have flirted——"

"God forbid!" Rod broke in.

"Mama, you are not to look at my prince like that." Zita shielded her lover. "He *isn't* making excuses! It's only that he loves me very much—just as I love him. It was all a funny accident—this—because I was falling down and he caught me. But it would have come soon, anyhow, would it not, my Rod?"

"I've wanted her from the first minute I saw her at the hotel, the night we arrived," Rod faltered, temporizing. For "it" would *not* have come if it hadn't been for the "funny accident." He would have kept his self-control, if Destiny hadn't played him this one more trick—thrown the girl into his arms. The sweetness of her, the nearness, the dearness, her heart beating against his! No man in love could have held out.

"And I've wanted him from the same minute," Zita boldly confessed, "only at first I feared he was so grown up he would think me a baby still."

"I bless God that such a love has come to my child," said the Contessa. "It is a chance in a million. And that it should come to-day—on her birthday!"

"It is old Katti who must be thanked as well as God—Katti, who is too rheumatic to wax floors!" laughed Zita, all life and happiness. Like the child she was, the girl flung her arms round Rod's neck and pressed her cheek against

his throat. With a catch of the breath he snatched her close, and held her as if he would never let her go.

He never *could* let her go, after this.

Short of telling the truth to these two gentlewomen, there was no way out. And he could not tell the truth. The truth would break their hearts. He remembered something about how "Honour rooted in dishonour stood." It was like that with him. He would marry Zita Magnoni, Guido's sister, if Guido dragged him down to hell for it!

"What matter if I go mad
So I have had my day?"

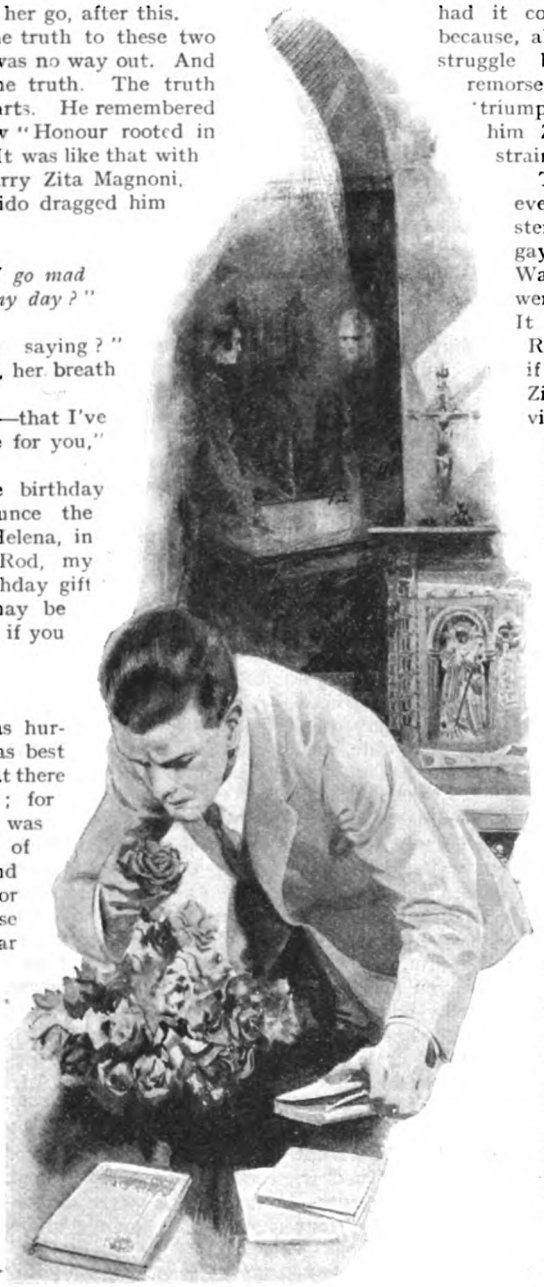
"What are you saying?" Zita's lips murmured, her breath against his throat.

"I'm saying that—that I've gone mad—with love for you," he answered.

"To-night, at the birthday dinner, we'll announce the good news," said Helena, in an ecstasy. "Oh, Rod, my dear son, your birthday gift for my little girl may be her engagement-ring, if you wish."

V.

THE wedding was hurried on. It was best for everyone that there should be no delay; for Virginia, because she was beginning to tire of Schloss Waldstern and its simple pleasures; for the Contessa, because she sickened with fear lest the wonderful luck of the family should prove too good to be true, and that something might happen to prevent the marriage; for Eve, because she sympathized painfully with Rod and felt the fever of his mind as though it were her own; for Zita, because she was dreaming fairy dreams of that mysterious country, marriage; for Rod, because he burned with a terrible love that would have frightened Zita had it come into her dreams; because, also, he feared that his struggle between passion and remorse might end in the triumph of remorse and lose him Zita; or else that the strain might break him.



He bent to breathe the scent of the roses which Zita had gathered for him.

To outward seeming, everyone at Schloss Waldstern was happy, even gay; but within, Virginia Wandsworth and Zita were the only happy ones. It would have amazed Rod, and touched him, if he had known that Zita's mother was another victim of remorse—that her ever-living New England conscience reproached her through wakeful hours each night because there was something she ought, perhaps, to tell the dazzling son-in-law-elect, something she would suffer through eternity rather than tell, lest it might disgust him with the Magnonis—and with Zita.

If she had been a Roman Catholic, Helena would have had the relief of confessing to one who would advise and at the same time hold her confidence sacred. She wouldn't, she knew, have taken a priest's advice if it had gone against her own desperate determination—still, it would have been a comfort to put her trouble into words.

But Guido the elder, her dead husband, had been an agnostic; marrying an Italian, not an Austrian subject, the American bride was not forced to become a convert. Zita, like her mother, was Protestant, consequently there were

not now so many formalities as in most matches between English or American men and girls of old European families. Guido the younger, on the other hand, had been an ardent Catholic, and if the war had not broken the peace of the world while he was a mere youth, Helena sometimes thought he might have abandoned the army for a monastery. If he were alive, what would he think of his friend Rod Wandsworth as Zita's husband? Just because of the family secret, he had said, on the one occasion when the subject was discussed with his mother: "My sister must not marry one of her beloved Italians. Anyone else, but not an Italian."

That was before the war, when Zita was a small, tow-headed child. There had been no more danger from the secret in those days than from a bit of marble when no flint is near; but, alas, flint and marble had struck out a ferocious spark since then!

Helena sighed and moaned at night as she thought of the fire that spark had kindled; Guido dead; their fortune extinguished in the flame—for ever, she had believed until Rod Wandsworth came back into their lives. Still, Guido was the last male of the Magnoni line. Helena told herself that the secret had died with him. There was no one left, no need therefore to "pass on the flambeau." She told herself, too, that she was morbidly conscientious about Rod, just because he could give them all they had lost—except Guido. She owed Rod a great deal, but this didn't mean that she need make a quixotic fool of herself. In any case, the old story could never affect Zita's life, now that Guido was dead.

NEVERTHELESS, one evening two days before the wedding, when the Contessa met Eve Wandsworth walking alone in "Maria Theresa's White garden" (that great lady had planted it, and decreed its whiteness), on a sudden impulse the older woman stopped the younger with a hand on her arm.

"My dear, one would think you and I had uneasy consciences, wandering by ourselves in the dusk like this." Helena laughed nervously.

"My conscience is always more or less uneasy," Eve replied, half in jest, half in earnest. "I'm that sort!—and I fancy you are too, Contessa. We take life too hard"

"Perhaps," Helena agreed. "I think that you and I are alike in some ways. My dear, there's a thing I'd say to you, if I were sure—*sure*—you would never breathe it to your brother."

"Of course I wouldn't," said Eve. "Lots of people confide things in me—I don't quite know why, unless it's because I'm rather a silent creature—and a 'man of my word' when I promise not to tell."

"Would you absolutely swear never to tell Rod, or even hint to him?" Helena persisted. Her voice shook. She felt that she was being a weak fool, but she was irresistibly impelled to throw a portion of her burden on the shoulders of this strong, reticent girl, so like her twin.

"If it's very serious, dear Contessa, maybe you'll be sorry afterwards if you've told," suggested Eve. "Not that I'd ever betray you—no, indeed—but——"

"If you'll never betray me, there is no 'but'!" cried Helena, quivering with eagerness now. "And—it isn't so *very* serious—these days. Everything is different from the old times. It is about—the Magnonis as a family—oh, nothing about their *health*, or anything like that: nothing that can do the slightest harm in the future. Still, it's a weight on my mind. I can't tell Rod. I wouldn't have him know for the world. He doesn't need to know. But you're his other self. You're so strong—it would be a comfort to me—a woman alone—Zita's mother——"

"Let me help you, then," Eve said, kindly, though her heart beat fast. She and Rod were suffering so much because of *one* Magnoni, it would be good to be of some use to another.

"I will. Only *swear* first by all you love best, that you'll never tell Rod—never let him know——"

"I take your word that he doesn't *need* to know, Contessa," Eve reminded her, gravely. "And as that is so, I do 'swear' to you, by my love for Rod—I'll never break your confidence."

"Then, it's this——" Helena, still clasping the girl's arm, drew her into a dim alley leading off the neglected garden, and pulled her down upon a rustic seat.

EVE could not sleep that night for thinking of the thing which she had heard. She thought of it from many angles, yet in the end she was not sure whether—if she hadn't sworn to keep the secret from her brother—it would be better for Rod if he knew, or—worse.

She was inclined to believe that, on the whole, it would be worse. It might deepen his sense of guilt, and even if she had been free to tell him, she would not have told.

VI.

SO they were married. For good or for evil the sister of Guido Magnoni was Rod Wandsworth's wife.

He was taking her back to her beloved Venice for a week or ten days. This was by the girl's own wish, for everything was planned by her wish. They would visit Paris, which Zita had never seen, and end the honeymoon at Rod's own place in Surrey, which was to be their home. Virginia and Eve were to leave Vienna on the same day, but would go in a different direction. They were travelling by way of Ostend, straight to England, for at last Virginia had the excuse she had longed for to take a charming furnished flat in London. Eve would

live with her, of course; and the two were to pack certain belongings at Wandsworth Court before the arrival of the bride and bridegroom there.

When Helena had kissed Zita good-bye with a few tears (not many; she wasn't the weeping sort), to Rod's surprise she slipped a small sealed envelope into his hand. By the way she did this (while Zita's back was turned), Rod knew that the letter was not intended for the girl's eyes.

"Read this when you get a chance—alone," the Contessa whispered, hurriedly, as she offered him her forehead. "Let it be some time to-day. Don't forget!"

Rod was not likely to forget!

Tired out with excitement such as she had never known, Zita dropped asleep in the train after two or three hours' journey, and that was the right moment for the letter. Rod carefully cut the envelope to avoid the slightest sound, and drew out a small sheet of black-edged paper.

"My dear new Son, who will help to fill Guido's place in my life," he read, with a swift pang, "I have often wanted to explain to you about our Zita's bringing up, but I am stupid enough and old-fashioned enough to find it easier to write than to speak. I'm afraid that one of my faults is to be old-fashioned. Partly it's my nature—my reserve, a kind of shyness; partly it is because I've lived since my marriage in a society where old ideas persist. In any case, the result is that Zita is entirely ignorant of life. You see, she has never been to school. I have educated her myself. She has had no intimate girl friends. You know in what retirement we've lived! I haven't allowed her to pick up newspapers. I've chosen her novels. She's so very young still, and until you came marriage for her seemed unlikely—a girl without a *dot*, in a country where men of her own class are too poor to marry anyone not an heiress. After you were engaged, I did think of having a talk with her, but she is such a child that, to tell you the truth, I feared by some inadvertence to make her shrink from marriage. I *couldn't* risk turning her from you, and her one hope of happiness. When you read this she will be your wife, and no foolish whim on her part can separate you two. I write so you may not misunderstand the child. But knowing your love for her, I need say no more. Forgive me, dear boy, for saying as much! My blessing on you both, Guido's, too!—Your affectionate H. M."

"Guido's blessing!"

With this letter, and the "blessing" fresh in his mind, Rod dared not reveal the passion of his love for the girl. He must wait. He must have patience. He must study her. After all, the iron restraint he would be forced to put upon himself was a light punishment for the sin (was it an unforgivable sin?) which he had committed.

AT Villasch, where Zita and he were to pass the first night of their marriage, Rod asked for a larger suite than the one he had engaged by letter. Instead of a bedroom, bath, and *salon*, he wanted two bedrooms; and accordingly the old-fashioned hotel provided two immense bedchambers draped in blue satin and yellow velvet.

"I ought to be thanking Heaven for a reprieve," Rod schooled himself, "for God knows if I talk in my sleep!"

Among the future pitfalls he had conjured, this one had never occurred to him until, trying to discipline his mind after the Contessa's letter, he consoled himself with one danger avoided.

Between the bride's room and the bridegroom's was a door; and Rod's silent answer to Helena's hints was to keep this door closed. He and Zita dined in their *salon* full of flowers he had ordered; and seeing the blue shadows under the girl's dilated eyes, he kissed her good night soon after their coffee and cigarettes.

"Sleep well, darling child," he said, at the door of her room. "You've had a hard day and we've got to start jolly early to-morrow, you know."

Zita looked at him in hurt surprise. "Are you going to let me be all alone in that huge barn?" she exclaimed. "Oh, Rod, I know it's full of rats and mice! So was Schloss Waldstern, but that was home and they were *our* mice and rats. I've never been in an hotel at night before, since I was a tiny thing with Mama and a nurse. I thought, when people were married, they stayed in the same room at night. I shall be afraid without you."

The blood rushed to Rod's head. "Do you want me with you?" he asked.

"But of course I do. I love you!" Zita answered.

By and by Rod came to her. The electric lights were dim, and in the vast, blue-curtained bed his wife looked to his eyes a vision from another world rather than a human girl. Her hair was thrown over the pillow like a glittering fan, so that her face smiled up at him from a halo of gold. He bent and pressed his lips upon her arm that lay in a delicate white curve on the blue-silk counterpane. It was like a young crescent moon, he thought, and she seemed sacred to him as the Blessed Damosel. If he could but come to her with an unstained heart!

In her hand was a red rose. "See," she said, "I saved these special roses for my own room. Did you notice we had only the other flowers on the dining-table? I've made a kind of shrine here by my bed, so it shall be like home. Look!"

Rod looked where she pointed. On a little lace-covered table close to the bed was a bowl of her favourite deep-red roses, which he had telegraphed the hotel manager to provide. Behind these roses Zita had lit a tiny night-lamp whose light shone palely over two large, framed photographs, her mother's and Guido's, the

latter draped with a tiny Italian flag, home-made, of silk. Guido had been taken in the uniform of an Italian officer, and from under the brim of his military cap a pair of sombre eyes stared straight into the eyes of his slayer, stared as they had stared in one unforgettable second five years ago.

The hot blood that had sent Rod's heart pounding against his side was suddenly chilled. He felt as if his veins were blocked with ice, and for an instant his breath stopped. When he could speak, he said: "I'm going to turn off the electric light, and then I'll sit quietly by you till you fall asleep."

Without waiting for an answer he pressed a switch, and the room was dark, save for the night-light that shone on the roses and the two photographs. Rod drew a chair so close to the bed that he could hold Zita's hand in his. Always he was conscious, across those cursed roses, red as the blood that he had spilled, of those pictured eyes that mocked him on his wedding night.

This was Guido's blessing!

Whether the girl wondered why he chose to sit by her bedside, or whether she took it for granted that it was part of the programme for a newly-married husband, at all events she accepted his presence there in silence. By and by, with her hand still in his, she slept, her long lashes shadowing her cheeks, her breath even and slow. Rod could not bear to draw his hand away and leave her alone. She had said that she would be afraid in this great barn—afraid of rats and mice. Rod decided to remain till dawn. If Zita waked, it should be to see his face, and know he hadn't failed her. He was sure that he could not sleep, even if he went away to the other room. He had never felt less like sleeping in his life.

How beautiful she was—what an exquisite child! For a long time Rod sat motionless, afraid of disturbing the girl if he stirred. Always his eyes were upon her face. He wished he hadn't thought of that danger, talking in his sleep! He did not see, now he had thought of it, how he would ever dare to sleep near Zita. He saw himself doomed to never-ending torture. A black curtain fell between his eyes and the lovely face with the shadowing lashes. It was an iron curtain, like the safety-curtain that comes down on the stage between the acts of a play. Guido had lowered it. Rod could hear him laughing in the darkness. "Now you know what's before you," Guido said. "You shall never sleep again—never sleep. You sent me to hell. Now you're with me—in hell—in hell!"

"Rod! What's the matter? Rod! Oh, *please* wake up!" Zita's voice was crying.

He wrenched himself back to consciousness with a groaning sigh, and found that, still seated in the chair, he had fallen forward with his face buried in the coverlet.

"My poor boy, how horrid, how selfish I was!" Zita wailed over him. "To let you sit there! And you're cold, cold, though the night's warm. You must have had some dreadful dream."

"Did I say anything?" he gasped.

"You muttered a few words."

"What were they?"

"You repeated twice over—'in hell—in hell!'"

"Nothing else?"

"Nothing else that I heard."

"Yes, I must have had a nightmare," Rod said, getting stiffly to his feet. "So sorry I waked you, dearest. I expect it's nearly morning. You'll be all right now. I'd better go to my own room—"

"No—no!" breathed Zita, and held out her arms. "If you love me, you won't go."

VII.

ROD wondered, in the days and nights that followed, if any man had ever lived through such a honeymoon as his.

Helena had thought Zita a child; but she was a woman, too. Her love, freely, generously offered, was heaven. His own hidden fear, never dormant any night for more than a few minutes of oblivion, was hell; the fear that he might talk in his sleep of the Thing ever stalking through his mind.

Even in the trenches, with the roar of great guns in his ears, he had slept more than he slept now in these summer nights of Nature's peace. Yet he was not without happiness. It was as if he stood with Zita in a garden on the brink of a chasm, he with his back to the gulf, and in his hand a goblet of sparkling wine that two beloved hands held for him to drink.

After ten days at Daniello's in Venice—the home of Zita's patriotic heart—they had a week in Paris, where the "Prince" showered presents upon his emancipated Cinderella. He bought her a rope of pearls, and more rings than she had fingers to wear them on. He made her choose dresses and hats, a belated trousseau, at the most expensive places, where prices frightened the girl; and on the way to Wandsworth Court they stopped in London at the Ritz for a few days.

"Rod doesn't look as if happiness was good for his health, does he?" Virginia remarked to her daughter, after a family luncheon, when the young married couple had departed, motoring down to Surrey. "He hasn't seemed himself since the war, really. But, by Jove! the poor boy looks as if four years instead of four weeks had passed since we threw rice and slippers after him and Zita at Schloss Waldstern."

With a sick heart Eve told herself that if Virginia had said ten years instead of four, she would hardly have exaggerated.

The twins had not a moment alone together for a word of confidence, and Eve thought that

Rod drew a chair so close to the bed that he could hold Zita's hand in his. Always he was conscious, across those cursed roses, of those pictured eyes that mocked him on his wedding night.

Rod had evaded an involuntary question in her eyes—" Is all well with you ? " But she was sure, as if he had answered the question, that somehow, in one way or another, all was *not* well. Rod was paying the price which he had known, and she had known, he would have to pay for Zita. Eve prayed that the girl and her love were worth it.

Zita had had enough gaiety in Paris to last for awhile, and it was her own choice that, instead of staying long in London, they should go quickly to her new home. In any case (as Lady Wandsworth consoled herself for missing a little fun), Zita could not have been presented that season, as the Courts were over.

Rod loved the old place, which had belonged to his people since Elizabethan days, and was built on foundations laid by King John. It was good to come home, and to show all his favourite rooms and haunts to Zita. The atmosphere was so restful that at first he had a sensation of intense relief, as if an intolerably hot, tight helmet had been lifted from his head. But soon the brain pressure, the nerve-strain, made themselves felt once more, and the nightly torture was renewed.

The bride and bridegroom were left alone only till the end of the regulation honeymoon ; then cars glided up the winding avenue under the oak and beech trees, depositing callers. Invitations arrived, and some had to be accepted. Zita was radiant at her first dinner-party, in silver tissue and cascades of crystal beads which would have made her look like Undine, if she hadn't tucked one of her loved red roses into the low-cut neck of her dress.

Since the night in Villasch Rod had detested those roses. He hated to see Zita wear them, yet he could not tell her so. She would be sure to ask him why ! To-night, however, he did say : " Don't you think that touch of red rather spoils the moony effect of your crystal ? " But the girl laughed. " I suppose you think it makes me look as if I wore my heart on the outside ! " she said. " *I* don't mind wearing it there and letting people guess it belongs to you—*all* of it that doesn't belong to my Italy."

Afterwards, sitting nearly opposite Zita at dinner, Rod gazed at her across banks of flowers, and remembered how she had likened that blood-coloured rose to her heart. The simile she'd suggested and his own sensitive dislike of the roses must together have made a deeper impression upon him than he realized at the time, for as he dropped asleep that night between one and two o'clock—early for him !—he dropped also into a dream : a dream of red roses.

They were heaped upon the breast of Guido Magnoni, lying dead in his green-grey uniform. More of the roses fell from somewhere above, upon the straight, stiff figure, which lay on a kind of bier ; more and more like red rain till even his face was covered. Then, suddenly, the still form moved, sat up, throwing off the roses ; and Rod saw that it was no longer Guido who lay there, but a girl in a white dress with one crimson spot just over her heart.

" My God ! I've killed her as I killed Guido ! " he cried out ; and, hearing his own voice, he knew that he was asleep. Yet he could not wake. He struggled to open his eyes. It was as if a hand pressed down the lids. He felt hypnotized, felt his mind being called out of his body, leaving it an empty, helpless shell.

ZITA had never been easy about Rod's health since she learned that almost every night he talked in his sleep, suffering some strange agony that he could not express.

Long ago, when she was very young, the girl had had a friend who talked in her sleep. This child had come to visit Zita in Venice, and had slept in a room adjoining hers, with an open door between. It seemed mysteriously awful to be waked by choking cries and exclamations ; and nurse had said that it was a sign of some obscure mental trouble when people had the habit of talking in their sleep.

One night Zita ran barefoot into the next room and tried to rouse her friend. She could not at first, but she discovered that the sleeper would answer questions in a monotonous voice like a mechanical doll speaking.

Often Zita had been reminded of those childish shudderings, when her husband shrieked out unintelligible things. She had even tried asking him questions in order to know what vision spoiled his rest. But always he had torn himself quickly out of his dreams without replying. And he had seemed so nervous, so ashamed of his queer weakness, that she had not the courage to refer to it by day.

Constantly with him, Zita was not struck by Rod's haggard looks as Eve had been, but she could see that he was thin, and that there was a tired paleness under the indelible brown of the war-tan. He didn't like to have his looks mentioned, so Zita kept her own counsel ; but she was anxious, even curious. The girl began to be haunted by the same ghost that was haunting her husband, though she could never catch sight of it, never make out what it might be like. She remembered the story of Psyche, married to a mysterious lover whose face she was never allowed to see ; how Psyche had looked at him by the light of a forbidden lamp as he lay asleep, and let fall a drop of warm oil on his shoulder.

" She had a right to look," Zita thought. " Cupid oughtn't to have left her, and made her go through all those dreadful difficulties before she could win him back."

This time Rod did not wake when she called his name and touched his forehead with her lips.

" Rod, dearest Rod, why do you talk in your sleep about being in hell, or killing someone ? Are you only *pretending* to be happy with me ? "

He waked with a great start; and in the faint luminance of the night-light near the bed they stared into each other's eyes.

She pleaded in a half-whisper, but Rod's subconscious self heard and answered. He spoke in a weary, monotonous voice, just as the sleeping child had spoken years ago.

"I'm pretending to be happy," he echoed.

Zita's heart missed a beat. She had expected no such revelation as this! Could it be true that his happiness was a pretence?

"Why aren't you happy?" she challenged.

"Because of Guido," the gramophone voice droned out.

Because of Guido. But this was nonsense. Life came back to the girl. It was only a stupid dream. There was no secret after all.

"What about Guido? Why aren't you happy with me because of Guido?" she persisted.

"Because—I——" the words came slowly. "Because I—killed him!"

Zita sprang from the bed with a stifled shriek.

Rod wasn't responsible for these answers she drew from him. Oh, no, of course he was not! They were part of the nightmare. But it was terrible to hear such horrors from his lips. For a moment she had felt that she couldn't be near this man who dreamed he had killed her brother. She was afraid he had gone mad. An impulse pushed her to run out of the room. But swiftly she turned and, seizing Rod by the shoulders, shook him with all her force.

"Wake up! You must—you shall wake up!" she panted.

HE waked with a great start: and in the faint luminance of the night light near the bed they stared into each other's eyes, the man flat on his back, the girl bending over him. Rod knew that the secret

was out. He had heard his own confession. He knew, too, that Zita had catechized him, and that some power apart from his waking will had compelled him to answer.

"So it's come!" he said, heavily. "It was bound to, sooner or later. The thing had got too strong for me. There's no use asking you to forgive me, Zita, for—what I did, and for marrying you. I could never make you understand."

The girl tottered away from him, and dropped into a chair. Her lips were dry as if a breath of flame had parched them.

"You don't know what you're talking about," she faltered. "You can't! Something must have gone wrong with your head—or—or you think your dream is real. Why, yes, *that* must be it! You dreamed you'd killed Guido—poor soldier Guido who loved you—whom you loved."

She waited for an answer, but none came, and she began again: "Unless you want me to die of horror, you'll try—try with all your might to wake up and be yourself. I don't know what will become of me if you have such dreams. You're frightening me to death."

Somehow Rod got to his feet, staggering like a man who was drunk. "The only thing I can do is to go away from you," he said. "That's what I must do—go away. I'll send for Eve till your mother can come. Eve *knows*."

Zita whirled out of her chair and stopped him before he could reach the door of his own room. She held his wrists with her little shaking hands. "Oh, my Rod, my Rod—you're out of your mind, stark, staring mad!" she sobbed, for she was weeping now. "You're not to go away from me. I'll be calm, and you must! I'll stay with you and nurse you till you're well again. Sit down, oh, do sit down. I'll telephone for the doctor."

"No," Rod said, mastering himself slowly. "Don't send for the doctor. He could do no good. No one—nothing in the world—can ever do me any good. It's you I must think of, Zita. It's like being a double murderer, to have married you. I've no excuse. I loved you too much, that's all. And even now, if I thought you'd really give me the benefit of the doubt, I'd lie—I'd say 'Yes, it was only a dream.' But after this I couldn't keep it up. You'd suspect—you'd begin to believe there was something in it after all. Then there'd be this to go through over again, only worse. You shall be free of me, Zita. Everything I can make over to you shall be yours——"

"Stop!" the girl broke in. Her hands, deathly cold, had loosed his wrists and fallen at her sides. "Perhaps you don't *know* what you said in your sleep. You said you'd killed Guido."

"Yes, I know."

"But Guido was killed in battle, fighting for his country. You were not there. You were in France."

"I was there, with him."

"Then—then it was an accident—an awful accident."

"It was—in a way—an accident."

"Oh, of course—of course. You couldn't have meant to kill your friend."

Rod was silent. Shrilly, Zita repeated the words: "You couldn't have meant to kill Guido." Her voice rose to hysteria. "You didn't—tell me you didn't mean to kill my brother!—my brother I loved better than I've loved anyone on earth—except you."

"I can't tell you that. It would be a lie," Rod groaned.

"But—if you meant to kill—it was murder!"

"Yes."

"But why—*why* did you do it?"

Rod thought for a moment. What if he told her why he had killed Guido? Would it help—or do more harm? What if he said: "Your brother was a spy for Austria. He'd betrayed his comrades, so I shot him." Would Zita believe he spoke the truth? No, she would not. She would take it for granted that he lied to save himself, or at best that he'd made a hideous, unforgivable mistake. She would hate him even more for thinking that her proud Guido could have sunk so low, than for being her brother's assassin. "I can't tell you why I did it," he said, at last. "I can never tell you why—God help me!"

"Then go!" she flung at him. "Go now! God *won't* help you! You have been cruel—wicked—to steal my love and marry me with my brother's blood on your soul."

"I know," said Rod. "You can't loathe me half as much as I loathe myself. I'll go at once if you'll promise first that you'll do nothing desperate: promise that you'll let me make up to you as best I can for what can't be undone. Will you do that?"

"No. For I think—one of us must die," she answered. "This world isn't big enough to hold Zita Magnoni and the man who murdered her soldier brother."

"I think the same," Rod answered. "But it's I who have done with this world, not you."

She put up her hands to her throat, as if she would choke back some words that tried to speak themselves. She was pale as a statue of marble in the glow-worm light of the night-lamp, and suddenly Rod remembered a thought of her which he had tried to express to Eve. "She's like a flower, rooted in granite."

It was the granite that hardened her against him now. The empty space where her love had been was filled with hate. There was no longer any softness in this young, delicate creature. "An eye for an eye," was the motto blazoned on her banner. She thought it right that he should die. She wished him to die.

"Good-bye, Zita," he said, quietly.

She made no answer. He was not even sure that she heard. She was staring over his

shoulder as if at someone behind him. Perhaps Guido was there.

For an instant Rod stood still, taking his last look at the face he had so loved. It was not childlike now, but coldly austere, almost cruel. It was sad to carry that stern picture of her with him into eternity. But so it must be. Without another word he turned and went out of the room into his own.

He closed the door softly. He could not have borne a jarring sound. There was an electric switch on the wall close by. He touched it, but as the light came on it turned crimson before his eyes, then black, and he fell like a tree that has been cut down.

VIII.

EVE had been "chaperoning" her mother at two dances that night. She herself felt that she had outgrown dancing, and nowadays she was in no mood for jazz, but Virginia adored it and knew all the latest steps. They had come on to the second dance, and Eve was having an ice and a talk with a man whom she rather liked, when she thought that Rod's voice called her name. It was so close, so clear, that she started and looked round, wondering if it could be possible that Rod and Zita had run up from Surrey without letting her know.

But Rod was not to be seen.

"Is anything the matter?" Captain Cavendish inquired.

Most men Eve would have answered evasively, but Cavendish had been a pal of Rod's in the war, and was aware of an odd experience which had befallen the twins. So she answered frankly. "I thought I heard Rod call me. I believe he *did* call. You remember that other time?—it was exactly like this. It was you who wrote me from the hospital—how Rod said he thought of me just as he was shot. Afterwards we compared notes, and I'd heard his voice at that very moment—at dawn, in my own room. Dick, Rod wants me to-night. Something's happened."

"What could happen in peaceful old Surrey except a dull dinner-party at worst?" laughed Cavendish. "It was different in the war. We were always tempted to give a psychic explanation to everything a bit weird. Take it from me, Rod's as right as rain."

"I wouldn't take it from anyone except Rod himself," Eve persisted. "Dick, I know you'll think I'm a double-dyed idiot, but I'm going to get my little car and start for the Court."

"My good girl!" exclaimed Cavendish, pulling out his watch. "At half-past one Ak Emma? What time would you get there, and what would you do when you did?"

"In the night, when there's no traffic, I can easily make the run in an hour and twenty minutes As for what I'll do, why, they never worry to shut the gates at night, and I still have my key to a door in the east wing close to my old rooms. I used often to dash down from town on a Saturday night when I was working in the war, and let myself in without disturbing a soul. No earthly use trying to keep me back, Dick. I'm going!"

"Then I'm going with you."

"That you're not, thanks all the same. I don't want you or anyone. You're to stay here and break it to Virgie when I'm off, that I've—er—gone home. You mustn't say it's to the *Surrey* home. She won't look into my room, and if all's well I'll be back to-morrow before she wakes up. If not, I'll 'phone."

Of course, Eve got her way, except that Cavendish would take her in a taxi to the flat for her key, and on to the garage where the two Wandsworth cars, big and little, were kept. He saw the girl spin out of sight through an all but deserted street, and then reluctantly went back to the house he had left. He was fonder of Eve than she guessed, and meant to make her care—some day.

The car did the distance in even less time than the girl had given herself. She was right about the gates being open, and whirled through without fear of waking the deaf old lodge-keeper, who was more ornamental than useful nowadays. But she stopped the car half-way to the house. Ears were sharper at the house than at the lodge, and she didn't wish to rouse those who slept.

As she drove through the night, Eve had already fixed upon her simple plan of action; and jumping out of the car she proceeded to carry it into execution. Before entering the house she walked stealthily across the lawns, turned the west corner, and looked up at the beautiful mullioned windows of the two rooms which Zita and Rod occupied.

If there were a light in Zita's room it was so faint that it must come from a night-lamp; but the big oriel in the room adjoining was bright, curtains drawn back, leaded casements open.

"I was sure it would be like this," Eve told herself, and started back, almost running over the springy grass, which gave no sound of her footsteps.

To see those windows she had gone to the extreme west corner of the façade, and round it to the side. Now she had to return, and reach the east wing where her own little suite, bedroom and sitting-room, had been. To do this she must pass the whole front of the house once more.

THERE was no moon, but a cloudless sky whose stars would soon be dimmed with dawn, and Eve could see the outline of the house clearly; the Elizabethan "E" of its shape, and the criss-cross of black beams. Suddenly the shadow-curtain over the nail-studded door seemed to draw away, then

to fall again. Someone had opened the door, and closed it after stealing out.

Eve could not see in the blue dusk who that someone was, but there was a glimmer of white, and she said to herself that it was a woman. Could it be Zita, all alone, rushing off to find a doctor for Rod, who had been taken ill? No. Zita was impulsive, but she wouldn't do a thing like that. The doctor lived a mile and a half away, in the village. If he were needed for Rod, Zita would ring, and send a chauffeur and a car.

Eve, standing on the lawn, looked up to the height of two stone terraces with shallow steps between, above which stood the house. The figure was coming down the steps. Eve waited, her heart pounding.

In the paling night the white form was like that of a ghost, and Wandsworth Court—like most old houses—had its legend of a "lady in white." But it was not the memory of a legend that made Eve's heart beat fast. It was her recognition of Zita, who trailed down the terraces in a nightdress, or thin, clinging gown of some sort. She wore nothing on her head, and her masses of fair hair floated over her shoulders.

"Why," thought Eve, "she must be walking in her sleep. Perhaps *this* was why the call came."

She had hidden herself behind a small clipped yew at the foot of the steps behind the second terrace, and as the white figure reached the level of the lawn, she slid forward. Never had she seen a sleep walker, but she had heard that it was dangerous to startle a somnambulist by a loud cry or abrupt movement. Zita, would, she imagined, pass her unseeingly, with wide-open eyes, and she would follow. How thankful she was that she'd come in time, for if the girl went straight on as she was going now, she might fall into the deep Round Pond.

But Zita did not pass with unseeing eyes. She stopped closely to the darkly cloaked intruder, drawing her breath with a gasp. She wasn't asleep!

"Zita—don't be frightened!" Eve soothed her. "It's only I. For Heaven's sake, what's happened? Why are you out here alone in your nightclothes? I felt something was wrong, so I had to come from town and see. Please—please speak to me!"

Zita did not answer. She tried gently, yet with surprising strength, to put the older girl aside and pass on, but Eve held her. "My child, have you and Rod quarrelled?" she implored. "Did you come out to—to do something wicked—and very, very stupid?"

This time Zita spoke. "We haven't quarrelled. I came to do the only thing that's left to do. You mustn't stop me. I tell you, Eve, you must not! You *know* why. He—told me you knew."

There was no longer any doubt in Eve's mind. From the moment she realized that Zita was not sleep-walking but wide awake, she had guessed.

"You want to drown yourself!", she said. "Of course, Rod will die, too, if you do that. I suppose you don't care?"

"I told him there wasn't room for us both in the world. He tried to make me promise that I'd be the one to live. But I wouldn't promise anything. He went to his own room then. I knew he'd never come back. That was what I wanted. Yet I didn't mean to go on living. I meant him to die first and pay his debt to Guido and our family. But I couldn't bear to stay and hear a shot. I ran out quickly."

"My God, perhaps Rod is dead!" Eve groaned.

"I hope so. The sooner it's all over for us both the better," Zita answered. "The one prayer I have left is that we needn't meet—on the other side. There must be so much more room there than here! Now will you let me go?"

"I will not," Eve said between set teeth. "I'm going to Rod, and I shall take you with me if I have to drag you, so there's no use struggling. I'm twice as strong as you are."

But Zita did struggle. She fought like a tiger-cub, and when she could not prevail she flung terrible words at her captor.

"I wonder you care to touch me!" she panted. "It's the same as if I'd killed your brother. I told him to die. And I would have killed him, to avenge Guido, if he'd refused."

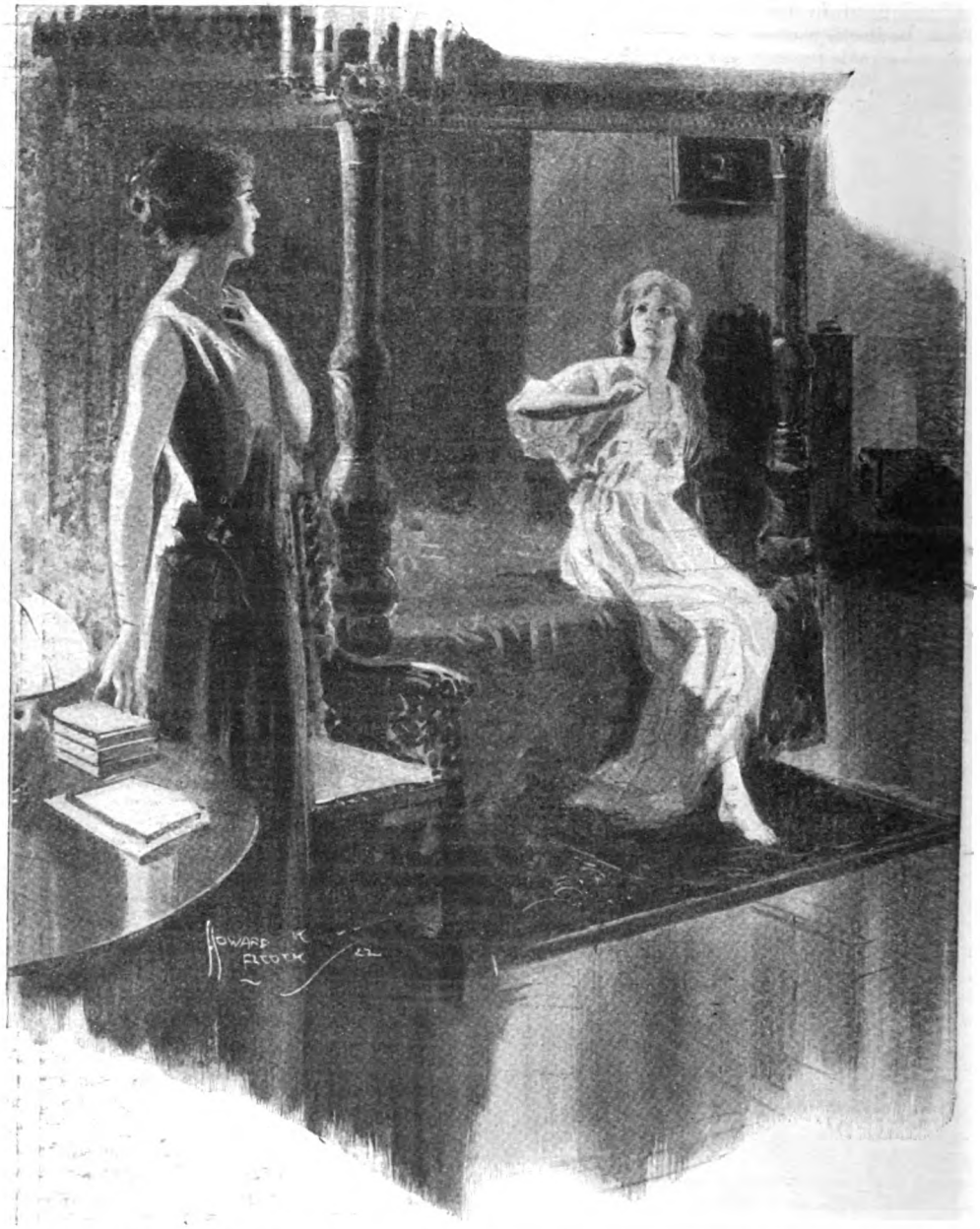
"Be silent! You don't know what you're saying!" Eve's contralto beat the light soprano down. The older woman no longer wished to be gentle. She shook Zita fiercely, till the girl would have fallen had she not been held with that bruising clutch. Then, lifting the slight figure in her arms, the tall woman carried it to the house.

Eve Wandsworth had done man's work in the war, and had almost the strength of a man, but the effort she made now would have been past her endurance, except in a moment of supreme excitement. She had a strange certainty that upon her decisions, her words and actions during the next few minutes, depended Zita's life and Rod's life—if he still lived.

Once in the house, she flooded the hall with electric light. Again Zita struggled to go free; but somehow—stumbling, straining, half falling, getting to her feet again—Eve contrived now to carry, now to drag her burden up the shallow, old-fashioned stairs. They reached Rod's door, and while his twin fumbled with the knob, Zita slipped from her hold. Quick as light, however, she was recaptured without a word or any sound save the two girls' panting breaths.

The door was locked, and no answer came to frantic poundings or calls of "Rod! Rod!" But there was another way to reach him, if he was there, without an appeal to servants. Still almost carrying Zita, Eve forced the girl

The figure was coming down the steps. Eve waited, her heart pounding.

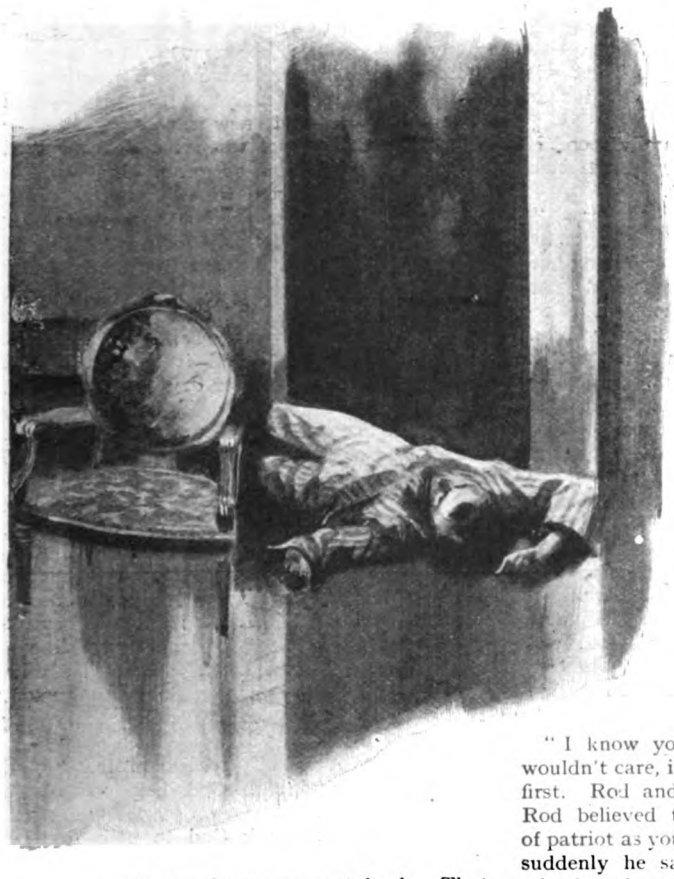


into her own room. The door through which Rod had passed when he left his wife was unlocked. Flinging it open, Eve gave a cry at sight of her brother's prostrate body—his face white as death in the electric light.

For an instant she believed that he was dead, that he had blown out his brains. But there was no smoke of gunpowder, no blood, no weapon, and a picture of what must have happened seemed to photograph itself on Eve's retina. Rod had left Zita in her room. He had come here to kill himself. But there had not been time. He had shut the door upon his life and love. He had put on the light and then, after the long torture and sudden shock, something

> "You are a devil to say that!" she breathed, rather than spoke. "If I could shoot you, or stab you to death with a knife, I would."

had snapped in his brain. He had fainted. That, in itself, was not serious. But in falling he had struck the back of his head on the uncarpeted oak floor. Probably he had concussion, and it might be long before memory



and consciousness crept back. That would be well—if no complications developed!

Eve's moment had come, and she knew what she would do with it. Each word would count now with Zita. One mistake might be fatal. Gentleness, pity, were out of place. The great thing was to be strong and not falter.

"It isn't Rod's fault or yours that he didn't obey you," she said. "It's Fate. But he may die of this yet. We shall see before long! You'll have to help me lift him, and get him on to the bed."

"No," said Zita. "I can't touch him, now that I *know*. You're cruel and horrible to treat me so—to force me back into his house. Guido's blood is on his hands. Let me go! This is—I hate this place, I hate you all."

"You shall not go. If you try, I'll stop you. Stay where you are," Eve ordered. "I suppose you think yourself a heroine and a patriot. You talk about your 'soldier brother.' You say Guido's blood is on Rod's hands. If I weren't so sick at heart I could laugh at your melodrama. If Rod dies *you* will be the murderer, not he. You've got to hear the truth now, Zita, the truth that Rod would never have told you, even to save his soul. But it's the one thing to save yours. By shooting your brother Rod saved him from something worse—so much worse, that in pity I'd have kept the secret as Rod did, if you'd had pity on him. I grant you it was wrong for Rod to marry Guido's sister. But he was driven to do it. Oh, he loved you, loved you desperately! But it wasn't only that. You were thrown at his head by your mother. Rod was rich. You were poor. He couldn't go away without seeming a cad and leaving you in the lurch, or—or telling you that he'd shot your brother because Guido Magnoni was an Austrian spy."

If Zita had had a weapon, perhaps she would have killed Eve then. "You are a devil to say that!" she breathed, rather than spoke. "If I could shoot you, or stab you to death with a knife, I would."

"I know you would," said Eve. "And I wouldn't care, if I had time to tell you the truth first. Rod and Guido were fighting together. Rod believed that Guido was the same sort of patriot as you are—Italian to the heart. But suddenly he saw a thing there could be no mistake about. Guido was for Austria, not Italy. He'd given his comrades away. Rod shot him through the head, and saved him and all your family from shame."

Tears came now to Zita's blazing eyes. "Shame to you, for the cruel, cruel lie!" she sobbed, in rage that burnt up sorrow. "Do you think if you swore on whatever you hold sacred in your religion—or on your brother's life—I'd believe that my Guido was a coward, a low spy?"

"I didn't say he was a coward, or a low spy," Eve said. "No spy thinks himself low. It needs courage to be a spy for the country of your choice. Austria was Guido's choice."

"You insult him, dead. And you insult me, living," Zita flung back.

"I don't blame you for thinking so," Eve answered. "I don't blame you for not believing me, yet—so I won't swear, as you invite me to do, on my religion or on my brother's life. I swore

by my love for him not to tell Rod the family secret your mother told me two nights before you were married. But I didn't swear not to tell you. And I'm going to tell you. I sha'n't expect you to believe me. I shall only expect you to believe her. Because when she hears what's happened, she'll understand that you've *got* to know."

ZITA was very proud and stiff, yet with the fury of her anger mingled sharp curiosity.

"What do you mean by a family secret?" she demanded, as a princess might demand response from an insolent servant.

Eve's sneer was as merciless as hers. "I imagined you knew, at least, that there *was* a secret. It lay so heavy on your mother's conscience that she was afraid if Rod heard it he wouldn't marry a Magnoni. She was determined not to lose him and his money, and his title, and this house, at any price. So she wouldn't tell him, and she lay awake at night feeling wicked and shameful. That secret had rubbed all the gold off the Magnonis' sixteen Austrian quarterings for *her*, my poor Zita. She was only too anxious to get you out of your family into ours. At last she couldn't stand it any longer, and one night she began to sound me. If she told me something about the family, which her conscience tortured her for keeping, would I promise, on her word that it would do him or his children no harm for him not to know? Are you sure you never heard of a family secret?"

"Only the secret about the Count's study—and that's no more than a legend," Zita vouchsafed.

"It's a great deal more. Could anyone look at the old panel picture in that room and not feel sure it covered a tragedy?"

"It covered a safe, I believe——"

"The 'safe'—the important safe—was in the hearts of men—the Magnoni men. Why did an Austrian Emperor give that castle on his own land to the Magnonis from father to son, and even to daughter, if no son existed? There must have been a good reason, you'd think! Well, there *was* a good reason—or an evil one, according to the point of view. The Magnoni to whom that castle was given had been a personal friend of the Emperor, but it wasn't friendship that won him the castle for his heirs—male or female, for ever, while they kept true. The Magnoni swore a terrific oath that all the men who came after him should serve Austria, not only as soldiers but as spies against any country with which Austria had a quarrel. Whenever a son of the Magnonis came of age (there was always a son, till now) his father told him in the Count's study at Waldstern what his future duty was—his duty promised for him before his birth.

"Years after the first Magnoni of Schloss Waldstern, there came the revolution of 1847 that made Italy free. It was in the time of your great-grandfather. Many people must have wondered why, after he fought—or *seemed* to fight!—for Italy, he was allowed to keep his property in Austria. But no one *knew* why—outside the family. Only the heir knew—when he came of age—and knew what he would have to do. Perhaps, too, when the heir married, his wife got to know or guess. It's hard to keep such things from wives. Anyhow, your mother knew. Luckily for her, while her husband lived there was no need for him to betray his adopted country—which he really loved. But he was obliged in honour—what he thought honour—to hand on the family secret to his son. 'Passing on the flambeau' was what the men called it! And it happened that Guido loved Austria better than Italy. Partly, that was his religion. And you know he had an Austrian tutor whom he adored—a priest. There's his excuse. Make the most of it! Your mother didn't know how actively he proved his love for Austria or how he paid for it. That was Guido's secret—and Rod's. Doesn't Guido's part of it counterbalance—and *over*-balance—Rod's part? I think it does. At first I was sorry I'd promised the Contessa not to tell Rod. But when I came to reflect I saw he'd feel even more like a murderer if he knew that he'd killed a man who was only carrying on a family obligation. Now—believe me or not. Does my story ring true?"

"God help me!" sobbed Zita. "God help my poor Guido. God help us all. I think—it is true."

"Then why not ask God to help Rod?" rang out Eve's question.

The girl covered her face with her hands, wound in her falling hair.

"A little while ago," she choked, "I told Rod that God wouldn't help him."

"What do you say now, when you know that he saved your brother from disgrace, and that he'd have killed himself with your curse in his ears sooner than you should know what Guido was—or defend himself for marrying a spy's sister—giving her everything that was his—and standing ready to die any moment, at a word?"

Zita said nothing. But she cast herself on the floor beside her husband and, lifting his head in her arms, held it against her breast. It seemed to Eve that his eyelids trembled.

"Thank God! she whispered to herself.

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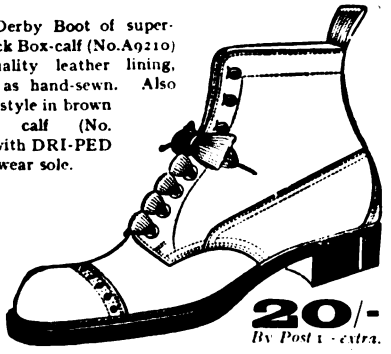

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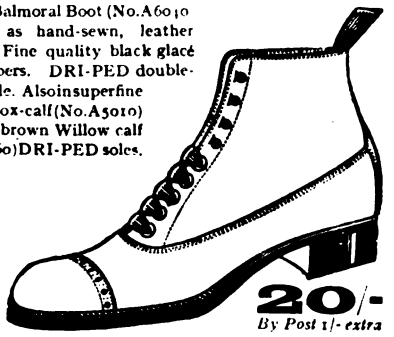

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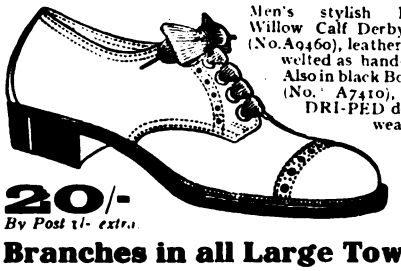

Men's stylish Brown Willow Calf Derby Shoe (No.A9460), leather lined, welted as hand-sewn. Also in black Box-calf (No. A7410), with DRI-PED double-wear sole.

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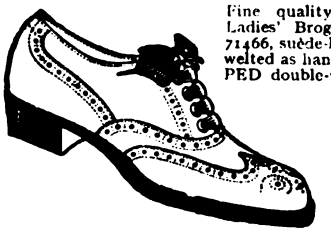

Fine quality brown calf Ladies' Brogue Shoe, No. 71466, suède-lined quarters, welted as hand-sewn. DRI-PED double-wear sole.

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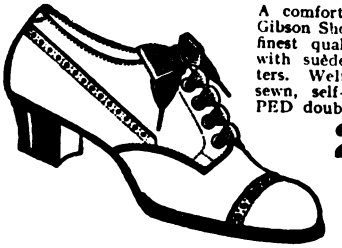

A comfortable Ladies' Gibson Shoe, No.71416, finest quality box-calf, with suède-lined quarters. Welted as hand-sewn, self-cap. DRI-PED double-wear sole.

20/-
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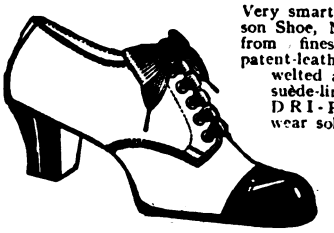

Very smart Ladies' Gibson Shoe, No. 71446, cut from finest glacé kid, patent-leather toe-cap, welted as hand-sewn, suède-lined quarters. DRI-PED double-wear sole.

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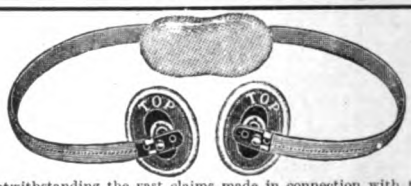

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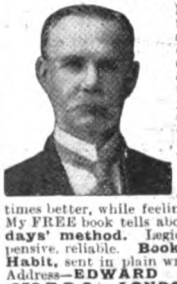

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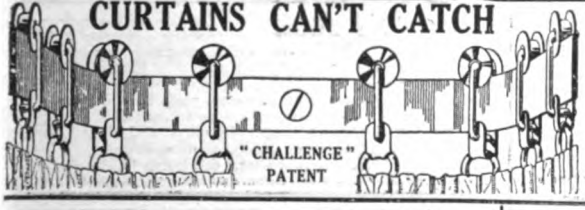

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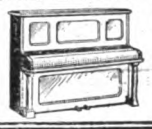

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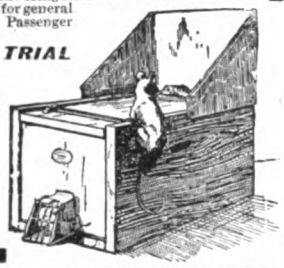

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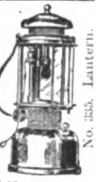

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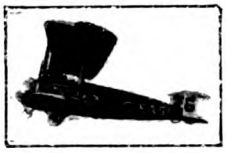

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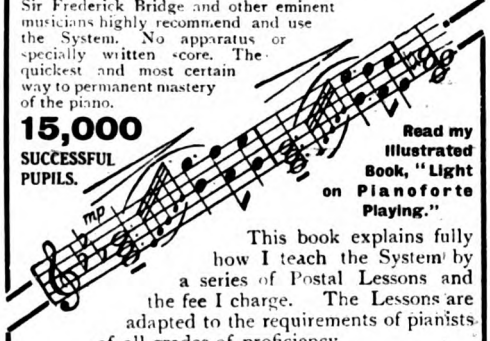

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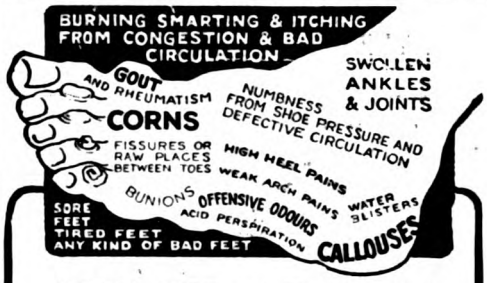

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for one or more of the complaints and disorders mentioned on the Coupon.

The Photograph shows a mail-instructed Maxaldite performing the wonderful Maxalding exercise known as the single-sided isolation, which is taught to all students. This feat alone ensures perfect Digestion, Elimination and freedom from any form of liver trouble.

By a Newly Discovered Process of Breathing, the tidal respiration is increased by an average of 50 cubic inches, ensuring speedy and ample blood oxygenation, sound heart and lungs, and rich disease-resisting blood.

Please send particulars of your case by letter, or by underlining your requirements on the Coupon, and post to—

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By return you will receive in plain sealed cover a copy of "Maxalding," the booklet explanatory of the method, and Mr. Saldo's opinion upon your case, free of any cost or obligation.

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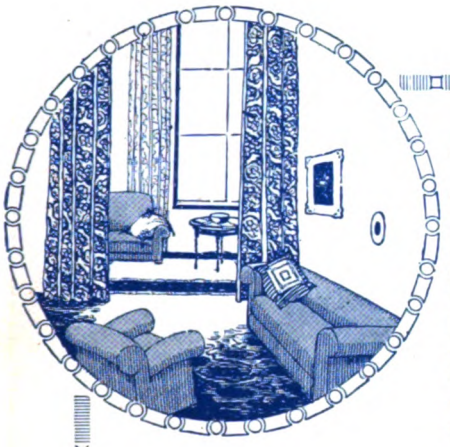

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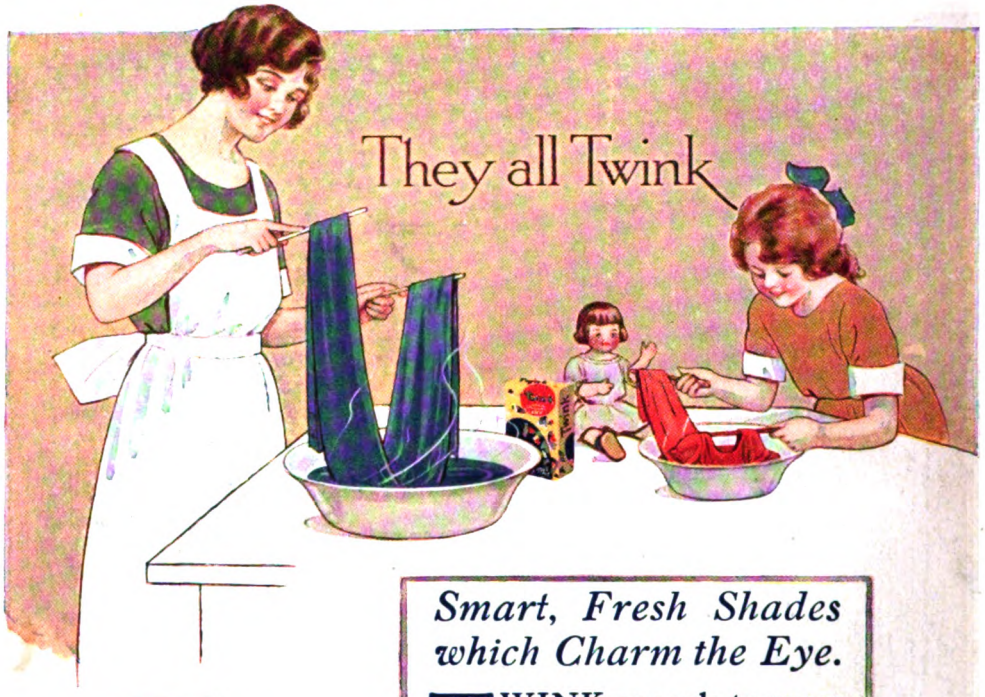

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CHRISTMAS NUMBER

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

1/6 NET

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BY
M. HUTCHINSON
AUTHOR OF
"WINTER COMES"

A. CONAN DOYLE - W. W. JACOBS
P. G. WODEHOUSE - "SAPPER"
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Hope—and the sequel

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Many will be the demands for Sharp's Super-Kreem Toffee this Christmas, and each request is sure of fulfilment, for discriminating parents know that Super-Kreem is the finest from the point of view both of taste and nourishment.

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Autobiography of MARSDEN

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This is the third of a series of personal histories which past and present students will contribute to the advertising announcements of The School of Accountancy. Apart from the names, which for obvious reasons are fictitious, the whole of these autobiographies are true, and have been seen and certified correct by David Paterson, Chartered Accountant, 135, Wellington Street, Glasgow.

"I WAS a shop assistant, having absolutely no knowledge whatever of book-keeping, when I enrolled as a student of The School of Accountancy.

"After completing one year's training I was successful in my application for the position of Chief Audit Clerk with a firm of Chartered Accountants at a commencing salary giving an immediate increase of 150 per cent. I gained the confidence of my superiors and was entrusted with very important duties, one being a reclaim of Excess Profits Duty involving thousands of pounds, which was successful.

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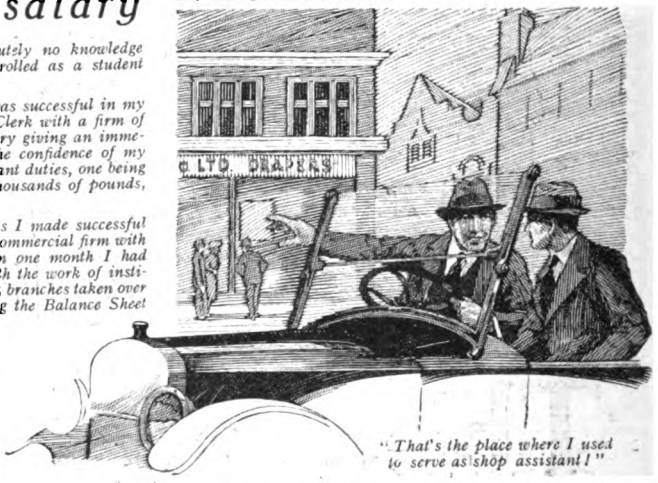

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TWELVE months ago these advertisement columns carried a series of striking personal histories proving the advantage and money value of School of Accountancy training. The men who read them then are among the students who to-day give you further proofs—new instances of the achievements possible to men who will train seriously for an average period of six to twelve months under School of Accountancy guidance.

The only difficult part of training is making up your mind to begin. Decide quickly, act at once, and you cannot fail to benefit.

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Train seriously for the great game of business! Train harder for this game than for any other. The issues are more vital and the rewards are infinitely greater.

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It contains useful information about business and business training, gives particulars of all courses and terms, and includes facts which will definitely convince you that The School's training will qualify you to fill a responsible executive position.

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". . . . . and with this goodly repast they did set before me a foaming flagon of the wine of my owne West Countrie — a bumper of Cider, no less! Was ever wearied prodigal so rightly and royally welcomed? Surely Genius was my vintner that night! Here was I come newly home from wars and wanderings, wearied nigh to death, and there on the very threshold of the dear homeland I must needs run into the arms of a Boniface with poetry in his soul and honest Cider in his cellars that did set my blood dancing like any raw lad's, a-sparkling to rival its very self . . . . . .

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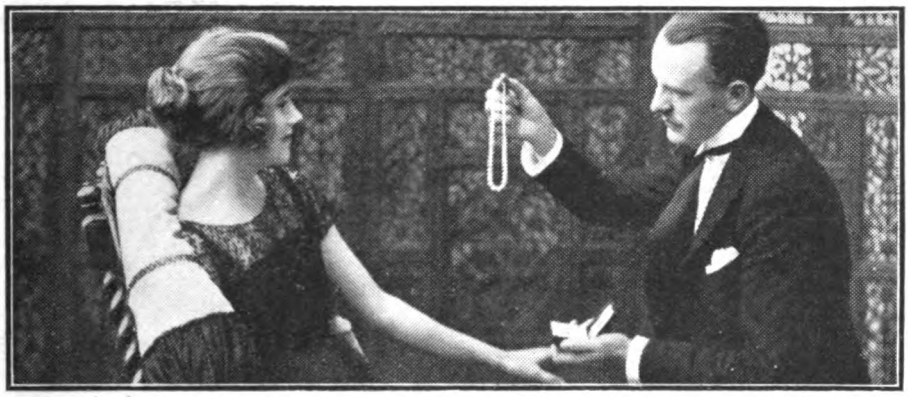

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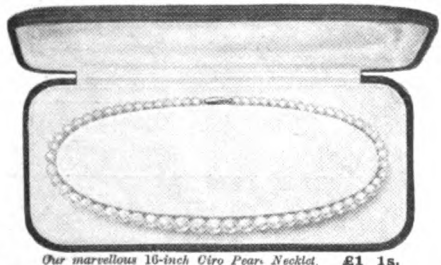
Our Showrooms are on the First Floor, over Lloyds Bank. Ciro Pearls cannot be obtained anywhere in the Provinces.



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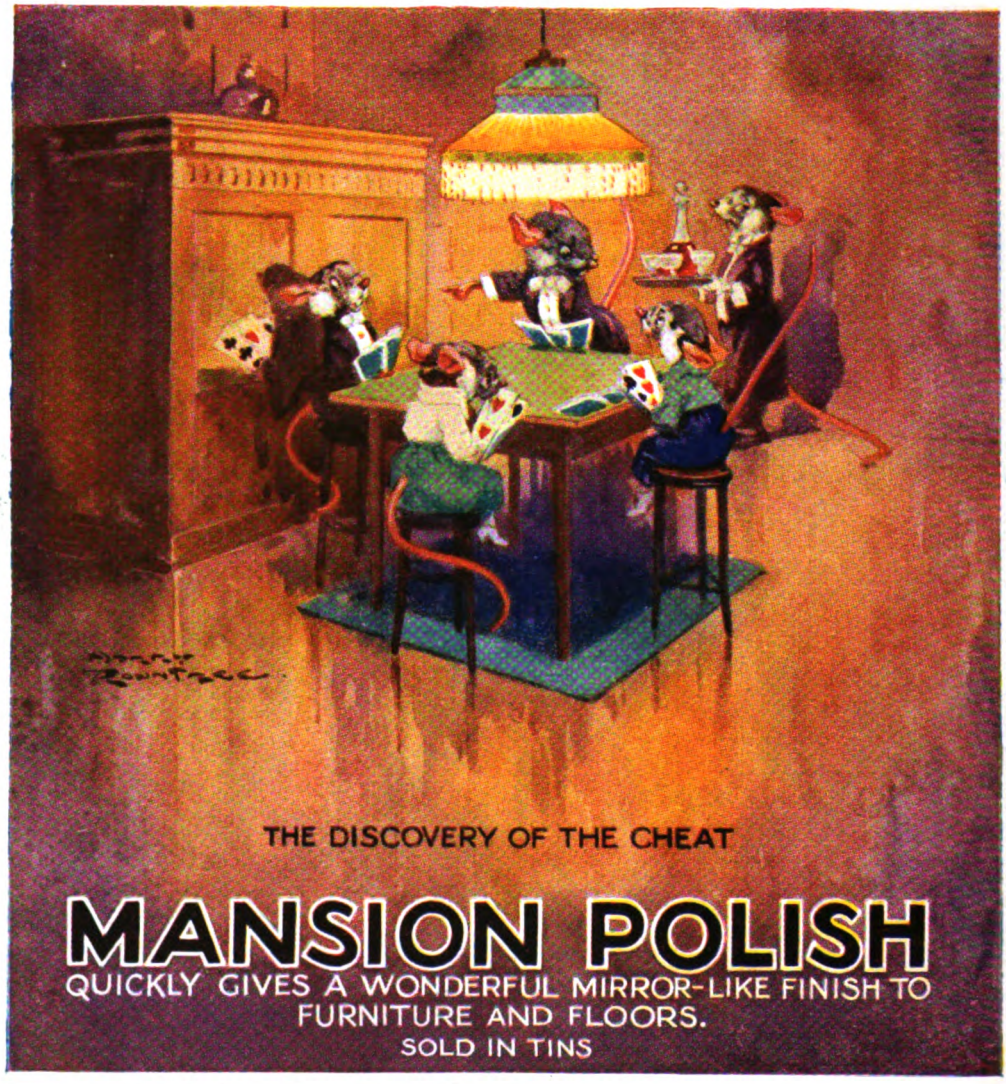

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10 for **6d.**

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Packed in silver foil to preserve the freshness and the flavour of the 1919 leaf.

20 for **1/-**

Use this Coupon for a Trial Tin

S. C. JOHNSON & SON, Ltd.
(Dept. S.12), West Drayton, Middlesex.

I enclose 6d., for which please send me a trial tin of Johnson's Prepared Wax Paste.

My Name.....

My Address.....

.....

My Dealer's Name is.....

To all who write requesting it we will gladly send free our illustrated book on "The Proper Treatment for Floors, Woodwork, and Furniture."

Johnson's Polishing Wax

Paste — Liquid — Powdered.

Every room needs the brightening touch of Johnson's Polishing Wax. It will rejuvenate your furniture, wood-work, floors and linoleum, and give your home an air of immaculate cleanliness. It imparts a beautiful, lustrous polish which will not show finger prints

Johnson's LIQUID Prepared Wax is the ideal furniture polish. It gives a hard, dry, oil-less polish to which dust and lint cannot cling. Takes all the drudgery from dusting. Protects and preserves the varnish, prolonging its life.

YOUR LINOLEUM will last longer and look better if you polish it occasionally with Johnson's Prepared Wax. Johnson's Wax prevents cracking and blistering —brings out the pattern and colour and protects linoleum from wear.

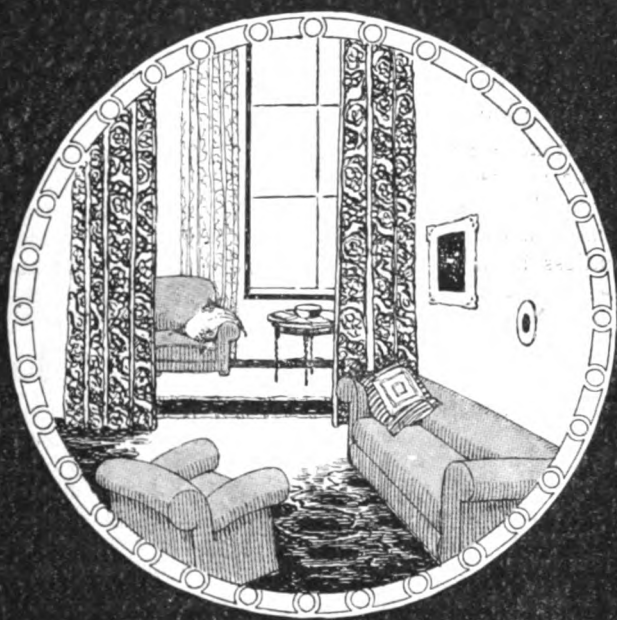
Johnson's Powdered Wax gives perfect dancing floors.

Insist on JOHNSON'S—there is no substitute.

Sold and recommended by the Best Dealers.

S. C. JOHNSON & SON, Ltd. (Dept. S.12), West Drayton, Middlesex.

"The Wood Finishing Authorities."



"Rexine"

BRAND LEATHERCLOTH

THE IDEAL FURNITURE COVERING

gives the same effect on furniture as leather upholstery, at a considerably less cost. It has the same deep grains and colourings, will not stain, fade or discolour, and can be sponged over when soiled.

Ask your furnishing house to show you samples.

REXINE LIMITED, Rexine Works, HYDE, Near MANCHESTER.

LONDON WAREHOUSE: 42, Newgate Street, E.C.1.

The Gifts of Greatest Worth

are undoubtedly those which show most kindly thought. Here is a Christmas Gift that is sure to be appreciated, one which brings happy recollections of the giver every time it is used. A lasting gift, a handsome gift. When you choose a Berkeley Easy Chair, the gift is something even more than a handsome piece of furniture, it is a gift that will mean for the recipient countless hours of luxurious ease, of delightful rest and comfort.

Wonderful Praise of Berkeley Comfort and Value

has come from many notable men and women and thousands of delighted purchasers in every walk of life, including The Rev. Father Bernard Vaughan, Lord Riddell, the late Geo. R. Sims, T. P. O'Connor, M.P., Jack Hobbs, Matheson Lang, George Robey, Gladys Cooper, Lillah McCarthy, Peggy O'Neil. The luxurious ease and handsome appearance of the Berkeley commend it to every lover of comfort and a well-furnished home; the remarkably low price places the Berkeley within the reach of everybody.

The Berkeley is designed to afford perfect rest to body and brain. It is fitted with long steel-coppered springs in the seat, back and front edge. It has bold, broad, heavily upholstered arms with an extra deep seat and double bordered front. Its value is unrivalled. Get a Berkeley NOW. For a small outlay you will then have a sound, handsome Easy Chair which will give you perfect service for years and years — long after the price is forgotten.

The Berkeley Easy Chair

HAS THE LARGEST SALE OF ANY EASY CHAIR IN THE WORLD

£4 : 15 : 0

15/- with order, and balance 16/- monthly

FREE DELIVERY in England & Wales (Scotland 5/- extra)

FULL CASH WITH ORDER £4 : 10 : 0

You take no risk in ordering a Berkeley for every chair is

Sold on the MONEY-BACK PRINCIPLE

Soon after receipt of first payment with your order we send the Berkeley *Carriage Paid* in England and Wales (Scotland 5/- extra). If upon examination it is not completely satisfactory you may return it within seven days AT OUR EXPENSE and we will REFUND YOUR MONEY IN FULL.

FREE *Write for samples of Tapestries to choose your own covering. Post Free with full Specification.*

H. J. SEARLE & SON, LTD.,

Manufacturing Upholsterers :

(Dept. S.M.) 70-78, OLD KENT RD., S.E.1.

West End Showrooms :

133 Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.1 ; And at 61-63 London Road, Croydon.

Berkeleys cannot be obtained elsewhere

Old King Cole was a merry old soul,
And a merry old soul was he.
He called for his pipe, and he called for his glass,
And he called for his fiddlers three.

And every fiddler had a drink,
And a very fine drink had he,
For there's none so rare as can compare,
With **O.V.H.**, you see.

Greer's
O.V.H
SCOTCH WHISKY

WILLIAM GREER & CO. LTD., Distillers, GLASGOW.
LONDON OFFICE: 35 Trinity Square, E.C. 3.

DR. BARNARDO'S HOMES

One of the 1,261!

7,319
children need food this Christmas.
Will you send A CHRISTMAS GIFT of
10/-
to help feed the largest Family in the World?
Included in this big family are 1,261 helpless babies.

Cheques, payable "Dr. Barnardo's Homes Food Fund" and crossed, may be addressed to the Director, Rear-Admiral Sir Harry Stileman (Dept. S.), 18-26, Stepney Causeway, London, E.1.

The "ACME" of Perfection

represents the highest point of perfection it is possible to attain, and

THE "ACME" POLICY

of

The Standard Life Assurance Company

represents the highest point of development in

LIFE ASSURANCE.

PRINCIPAL FEATURES.

A Policy Payable at Death.
Premiums Limited to 20 Fixed Payments.
Guaranteed Surrender, Loan and Paid-up Policy Values.
A Guaranteed Surrender Value at the end of 20 years of at least all tabular premiums paid (for entrants under 40).
A Guaranteed Reversionary Bonus vesting at the end of the 20 years of 50% of the Sum Assured.
Full participation after the 20 years in all Bonuses declared (Triennial).
Guaranteed Disability Benefits—whereby in the event of the Life Assured becoming permanently and totally disabled :—
(*a*) Payment of Premium ceases.
(*b*) One-tenth of the SUM ASSURED is payable annually for ten years.
(*c*) The full Sum Assured is payable at death.

Write for Explanatory Leaflet of the "Acme" Policy "H. 18."

***Head Office :* 3, GEORGE STREET, EDINBURGH.**

LONDON : 110, Cannon Street, E.C.4, and 15a, Pall Mall, S.W.1. DUBLIN : 59, Dawson Street.

H. SAMUEL

85 SHOPS ABLAZE WITH XMAS GIFTS AT FACTORY PRICES

PRINCIPAL BRANCHES:

LONDON—
47, King St., Hammersmith
22, Liverpool St., E.C.
11, Walworth Rd., S.E.
22, Broadway, Stratford
22, North End, Croydon
16, Powis St., Woolwich
42, High St., Islington
13, High St., Islington

PROVINCES—
Bath: 15, Union St.
Blackpool: Church St.
Bradford: 75, Kirkgate
Brighton: 29, Western Road
Bristol: 37, Wine St.
Derby: 31, Cornmarket
Exeter: 211, High St.
Gloucester: 3, Southgate St. (The Cross)
Hull: 9, Silver Street
Ipswich: 5, Tavern St.
Leeds: 39, Briggate
Leicester: 7, Gallowtreegate
Lincoln: 231, High St.
Middlesbrough: 46, Linthorpe Rd.
Newcastle-on-Tyne: 2, Grainger St. West
Northampton: 2, Gold St.
Nottingham: 31, Long Row
Norwich: 15, The Walk
Oxford: Carfax Corner
Plymouth: 11, George [St.
Portsmouth: 141, Commercial Rd.
Preston: 17, Fishergate
Reading: 50, Broad St.
Sheffield: 43, High St.
Southampton: 155, High Street
Wolverhampton: 1, Queen Street
Worcester: 27, The Cross
York: 29, Coney St.

WALES—
Cardiff: 7, St. Mary St. and 6, Queen St.
Merthyr: 119, High St.
Newport: 26a, High St. & 172, Commercial St.
Swansea: 265, Oxford St.

SCOTLAND—
Aberdeen: 72, Union St.
Dundee: 1, Reform St.
Edinburgh: 40, North Bridge; 25, Princes St.; and 46, Leith St.
Glasgow: 134 and 136, Argyle Street

Send a postcard for full list.

FREE BOOK OF 3,000 XMAS GIFTS

BIG ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE of Money-Saving Bargains in Jewellery, Watches, etc.
FREE! Send your Address.

21/-

STERLING SILVER WRIST WATCH.

A FULL MONTH'S TRIAL ALLOWED.

With new fancy shaped case, jewelled movement, rich Opal dial.

15/-

GOLD BROOCH. Charming design. Astounding value. **15/-**

THERE'S AN H. SAMUEL SHOP NEAR YOU

packed with thousands of Xmas Gifts that bring endless delight to all! And when you buy at any of H. Samuel's 85 Shops you buy

DIRECT FROM H. SAMUEL'S OWN IMMENSE FACTORY

at prices that mean enormous saving! See the amazing bargains in Watches, Jewellery, Electro-plate and Cutlery, in many cases at

POUNDS BELOW USUAL RETAIL PRICES

at your nearest Branch to-day!

95/-

SOLID GOLD BRACELET WATCH 95/-

Latest design in Solid Gold, 15-jewel lever movement. Warranted 10 years.

CALL TO-DAY

50/-

ROLLED GOLD LEVER WATCH. Fully jewelled lever movement. Warranted for 10 years.

35/-

35/-

GOLD NECKLET & PENDANT.

Set with lustrous Opals.

45/-

Half-hoop Ring. Richly designed. 18 ct. Gold setting .. **45/-**

65/-

Fine Cluster of 7 Diamonds. 18 ct. Gold setting.. **65/-**

75/-

Exquisite 3 stone Diamond Half-hoop Ring, 18 ct. Gold **75/-**

8/8/-

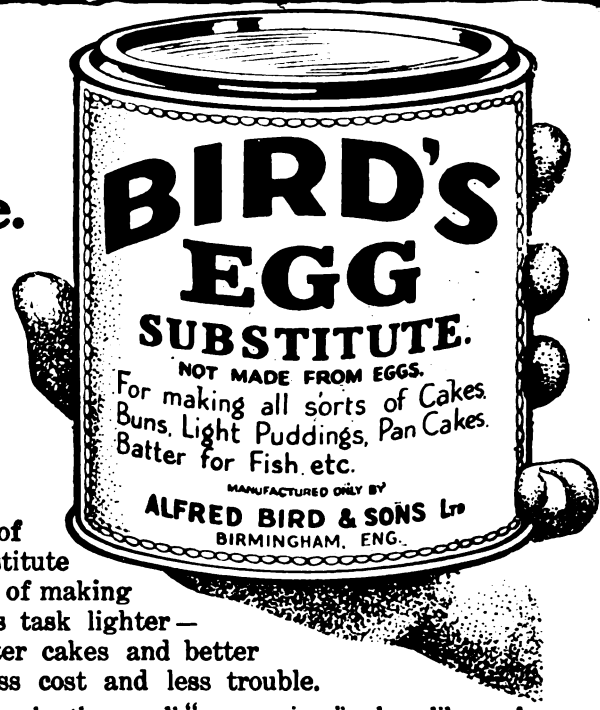
Crossover Ring, 2 fine clusters of Diamonds, 18 ct. Gold **8 gns.**

CALL AND SEE THE ACTUAL ARTICLE

CALL NOW!

H. SAMUEL LTD.,
The Empire's Largest Jewellers.
Headquarters:
103, 119 & 121, MARKET ST., MANCHESTER.

A tin with a purpose.



Every tin of Bird's Egg Substitute has the purpose of making the housewife's task lighter—of making better cakes and better puddings at less cost and less trouble.

Whether they be the small "one-a-piece" cakes, like rock buns, Castle cakes, etc.; or the big "cut-and-come-again" family cakes, Bird's Egg Substitute makes them finer, more appetising and more nourishing.

Every tin of Bird's Egg Substitute fulfils its purpose, because the pure golden powder which it contains is prepared by *BIRD'S* unrivalled experience. *"If it's BIRD'S it's pure,"* has passed into a proverb.

Bird's Egg Substitute imparts richness, lightness and flavor to all kinds of cakes, buns and puddings. No eggs or baking powder or self-raising flour required. *Buy it to-day and use the good old English recipes in every tin.*

E.S.12b

The HASLAM Fabrics

NOW 1/9 PER YD.

Width 39/40 ins. Your draper stocks.

TRUSONAIN

For Lingerie and Blouses

Look for the name on the Selvedge.

White, Black, and in Fifteen Dainty Shades.

Write for Pattern Card, Post Free from Haslam's, Ltd., Manchester.

8

GREAT WINTER SALE of

WITNEY BLANKETS

DIRECT FROM WITNEY. BUY ONLY FROM THE WITNEY BLANKET CO., LTD., WITNEY.

A WORLD-FAMOUS FIRM SELLING WORLD-FAMOUS GOODS.

Half a Century's Reputation as Senders Direct from Witney. PATTERNS FREE. Thousands of Bundles of Dainty Miniature Blanket Samples ready for Distribution.

FILL in coupon for your free patterns to-day, and send to THE WITNEY BLANKET CO., Ltd., WITNEY, the firm with many years' reputation for quality, value and fair dealing.

THE WITNEY BLANKET CO., LTD., have great facilities for dealing with their world-wide "Direct from Witney" Scheme of Selling Witney Blankets, The World's Best, on the system of "Seeing Before Buying," which has been so popular for many years.

This is Everybody's Best Way to Buy Blankets.

DIRECT FROM WITNEY

Take advantage of this splendid AUTUMN SALE OFFER. Buy before the cold winter weather comes. WITNEY has been FAMOUS for BLANKETS for CENTURIES, and for upwards of half a century THE WITNEY BLANKET CO., LTD., have been sending their Blankets to all parts of the world on the system of "Perfect Satisfaction or Money Back in Full." Take advantage *now* of this offer, viz., **Genuine Witney Blankets Direct from the Factory at Bargain Prices. WITNEY BLANKETS ARE PROTECTED BY LAW. No Blankets made elsewhere can be called Witney Blankets. The Witney Blanket Co., Ltd., deal only direct with the public. Therefore your orders should be sent to The Witney Blanket Co., Ltd., direct, who have no agents.**

Every Blanket a mass of comforting warmth. A Witney Blanket spells—COMFORT. Wherever the English language is spoken, there you will find THE WITNEY BLANKET CO.'S satisfied customers. THE WITNEY BLANKET CO., Ltd., Witney, Oxfordshire, allow you to view, free of all cost or obligation, samples (Dainty Miniature Blankets) of the actual articles. Send for them to-day, and see the Beautiful Goods and Great Bargains we offer.

POST SALE COUPON TO-DAY

For Patterns & Particulars of Witney Blankets direct from Witney

To THE WITNEY BLANKET CO., Ltd.
Butter Cross Works, WITNEY, Oxfordshire.

Please send me Post Free Miniature Blankets as patterns of Blankets direct from Factory (which I will return within FOUR DAYS).

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

STRAND MAG., Dec. .....

THE WITNEY BLANKET CO., Ltd., WITNEY, Oxfordshire.

Coleman Quick-Lite

THE IDEAL GIFT—APPRECIATED ALL THE YEAR THROUGH—will give the final touch of happiness and good cheer in every home at Christmas.

BURNS COMMON PETROL.

LIGHTS WITH ORDINARY MATCHES.

300 CANDLE POWER.

COSTS LESS THAN HALFPENNY PER HOUR TO BURN.

POST FREE COMPLETE.

CQ 307 **63/-**

CQ 329 **66/-**

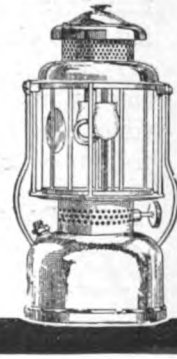
A WONDERFUL LAMP.

Generates its own gas from common petrol and lights with matches—no smoke or soot—needs filling only once a week.

HURRICANE LANTERN.

Wind and stormproof—a real boon for all outdoor work.

LQ 327 - - **52/6**



THE COLEMAN QUICK-LITE CO., Ltd.

10, Electric Parade, Norwood, London, S.E. 27.

Let young and old eat what they like this Christmas –

LET eight and eighty share in the good things of the table with equal zest and let the shadow of digestive trouble be banished completely. *Yuletide!* It is the one great festival of the year when it behoves even the most sober-minded of us to enjoy ourselves—to "eat and be merry"!

. . . And digestive trouble *will* be banished completely for those who take Bisurated Magnesia, as this fine old remedy gets down to the CAUSE of such disorders as indigestion, dyspepsia and gastritis and corrects it—absolutely. A dose of Bisurated Magnesia prevents all possibility of stomach distress, or stops it instantly if it has started. The heartiest meal may then be eaten, secure in the knowledge that all is well and, so far from causing pain, the food will actually do one good. Just get a 1/3d. package of Bisurated Magnesia, either powder or tablets, from your chemist to-day and thus be prepared for a right royal time this Christmas. And pass the good news along; tell your friends who wonder if they "dare touch just a little of that pie"

–they can if they take 'Bisurated' Magnesia!

Bismag Ltd. London, N.W.1

Give "De Reszkes" at Christmas

WHEN "De Reszke" Cigarettes convey the wish of "A HAPPY CHRISTMAS," there is no doubt of the wish being fulfilled. Neither is there a doubt of the compliment implied by this gift, for in all refined circles "De Reszkes" are appreciated as the supreme expression of cigarette quality.

Both "De Reszke" Tenor and American are obtainable from your tobacconist, handsomely boxed, with an additional plain outer box (50's and 100's) for protection when sending through the post.

Illustrated above is the "De Reszke" AMERICAN (Virginia). Box of 100 at 8/2. Also in 50's at 4/2 and 25's at 2/1.
In similar boxes are "De Reszke" TENOR (Turkish). Box of 100 at 11/9. Also in 50's at 6/1 and 25's at 3/2.

"De Reszke" The Aristocrat of CIGARETTES

CABINETS: Illustrated below is the 250 Cabinet which contains "De Reszke" AMERICAN (Virginia) Cigarettes, assorted plain, gold, cork and silk tipped. Price 25/-.

Cabinets of 250 "De Reszke" TENOR (Turkish) Cigarettes, assorted as above, 34/-.

Cabinets of "De Reszke" AMERICAN 100—assorted plain, gold and cork tipped, 10/-; 100 assorted colours silk tipped, 11/-.

Cabinets of "De Reszke" TENOR 100—assorted plain, gold and cork tipped, 13/6; 100 assorted silk tipped, 14/6.

Also obtainable are 100 Cabinets "De Reszke" Cigarettes containing 5 kinds—AMERICAN, TENOR, SOPRANO, BASSO, and CLUB SPECIAL—each kind assorted plain, gold, cork and silk tipped, price 14/-. Cabinets of 60 containing 5 kinds as above, but plain, 7/6.

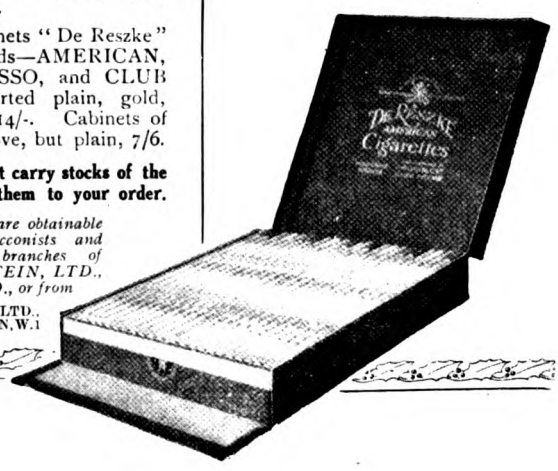
If your usual tobacconist does not carry stocks of the above Cabinets he can obtain them to your order.

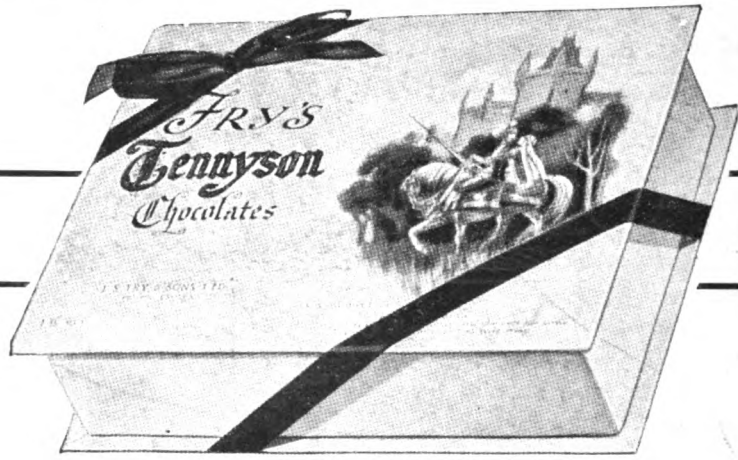
SOPRANO: The "De Reszke" Turkish Cigarettes for Ladies. In boxes of 100 for 10/9, 50 for 5/7, 25 for 2/10½. Also silk tipped (one colour or assorted colours), 100 box at 12/9, 50 box at 6/7.

AMERICAN
Virginia, round.
Popular size.
TENOR
Turkish, oval.
Popular size.
SOPRANO
Turkish, round.
Ladies' size.
BASSO
Turkish, extra large, oval.
CLUB SPECIAL
Turkish, extra large, round.

"De Reszke" Cigarettes are obtainable at all high-class Tobacconists and Stores, including all branches of SALMON & GLUCKSTEIN, LTD., and A. I. JONES, LTD., or from

J. MILLHOFF & CO., LTD.,
86, PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1





FRY'S Tennyson

3/6 per lb.

2/- per ½lb.

FRY'S wonderful Tennyson Chocolates! So original, so piquant, so refreshing are these confections, that they stand out as unique gifts for Christmas.

PURVEYORS TO H.M. THE KING

By Appointment

Chivers' Jellies

FLAVOURED WITH RIPE FRUIT JUICES

SIMPLE to make —LUSCIOUS to taste—and perfectly PURE and WHOLESOME.

CHIVERS & SONS, LTD.,
The Orchard Factory, Histon, Cambridge.

FREE

BIG CATALOGUE OF MONEY SAVING CHINA BARGAINS

FREE GIFTS

HUNDREDS OF DESIGNS IN ACTUAL COLORS FOR ALL BUYERS

HOUSEHOLD and Private Orders our **SPECIALITY.** Splendid Bargains in China, Pottery, and Glass. Tea, Dinner, and Toilet Sets from **12/9.** Complete Home Outfits from **57/6.** **CATERING CROCKERY** Outfits from **75/-.**

SPECIAL UNBREAKABLE QUALITY CHINA
for Kitchen, Camp, Barrack, Hospital Use.

ONLY 28/9 PACKED FREE

This beautiful Tea Service, Splendid Quality. Tea Service, 6 persons, **18/3.** Dinner Service, **39/3.**

PATENT NON-DRIP TEAPOTS. The pot that saves the Cloth. Our own invention and manufacture. Guaranteed Perfect, Successful, Economical.

Satisfaction Guaranteed. All Prices Reduced.

Send Postcard To-day for Complete ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE FREE

CENTURY POTTERY Co.,
Manufacturers,
DEPT. S.M.7, BURSLEM, STAFFS.

Benger's Food does three things for the dyspeptic——

it gives complete nourishment;
it allays the craving of the stomach;
it helps to win back the natural digestion.

Benger's Food is so highly nutritious that athletes use it in training, so delicious that invalids and aged persons enjoy it, year in and year out.

An explanation of DYSPEPTIC conditions.

Mental or physical overstrain—overwork or worry—sedentary work, or shortage of exercise—over-indulgence—unsuitable, or unsuitably balanced food—sudden weather changes—chill—are among the causes that bring about dyspepsia, *i.e.*, disturbed digestion. Persons suffering from it are in the state that the digestive functions are not properly or adequately doing their work, notwithstanding that the bodily system may be urgently requiring sustenance. Food not properly digested undergoes fermentative changes, resulting in flatulence and pain, and a disturbed state of health ensues.

The immediate requirement is to supply nourishment that the system can take in with little digestive effort. Benger's Food is expressly devised to meet such conditions to nourish and sustain in weakness and illness, and to overcome the evils of malnutrition which arise from digestive complications or weakness, whether temporary or long-standing.

BENGER'S Food

is sold in tins by Chemists, etc. —————— everywhere.

Prices—Size No. 0—1/4; ***Size No.*** 1—2/3; ***Size No.*** 2—4/-; ***Size No.*** 3—8/6

The Booklet of Benger's Food contains dainty recipes which give relief from the sameness of milk and similar diet These are so light as to give nourishment with digestive rest. Post free on request from

BENGER'S FOOD, LTD., —— Otter Works, —— MANCHESTER.

NEW YORK (U.S.A.): 90, Beekman St. SYDNEY (N.S.W.): 117, Pitt St.

324

To give a child Something is Good; to give a child Something TO DO is Better.

Let them make their own Xmas Toys with

PLASTICINE

Home Modelling Outfits

Complete Modeller Box, **4/9** & **6/9** post free. Full range can be seen in the shops at prices from **1½d.** to **£1 1s.**

Don't Forget

NOVLART

The Stencil Picture Process — An Ideal Pastime for Winter Evenings and making your own Xmas Cards, **2/4**, **4/3** and **8/3** post free.

HARBUTT'S PLASTICINE, Ltd., 3, Bathampton, Bath

GRANT'S MORELLA CHERRY BRANDY

IN TWO QUALITIES:—

"SPORTSMANS" *dry,* **"QUEENS"** *Sweet*

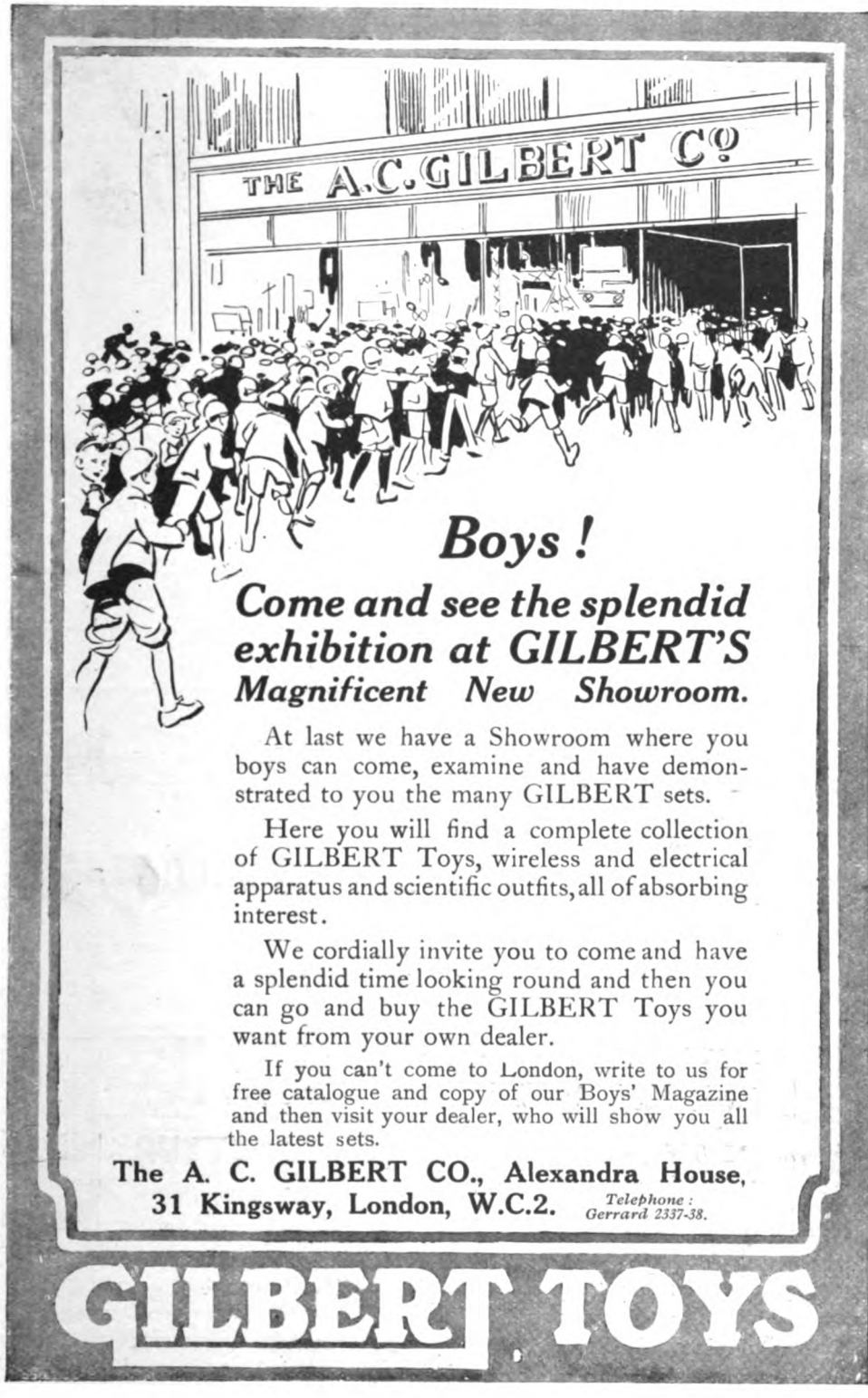
THE combination of fine old Brandy and matured juice of the English Morella Cherry makes GRANT'S MORELLA CHERRY BRANDY unquestionably one of the most wholesome and delicious Liqueurs in the world.

It is essential that you should ask for GRANT'S and see that you obtain GRANT'S MORELLA. A good way to remember this is to memorise:—

WELCOME ALWAYS, KEEP IT HANDY, GRANT'S MORELLA CHERRY BRANDY.

From all leading Wine Merchants, Hotels, Restaurants &c.

Distillery, Maidstone.



Boys!

Come and see the splendid exhibition at GILBERT'S

Magnificent New Showroom.

At last we have a Showroom where you boys can come, examine and have demonstrated to you the many GILBERT sets.

Here you will find a complete collection of GILBERT Toys, wireless and electrical apparatus and scientific outfits, all of absorbing interest.

We cordially invite you to come and have a splendid time looking round and then you can go and buy the GILBERT Toys you want from your own dealer.

If you can't come to London, write to us for free catalogue and copy of our Boys' Magazine and then visit your dealer, who will show you all the latest sets.

The A. C. GILBERT CO., Alexandra House, 31 Kingsway, London, W.C.2. *Telephone: Gerrard 2337-38.*

GILBERT TOYS

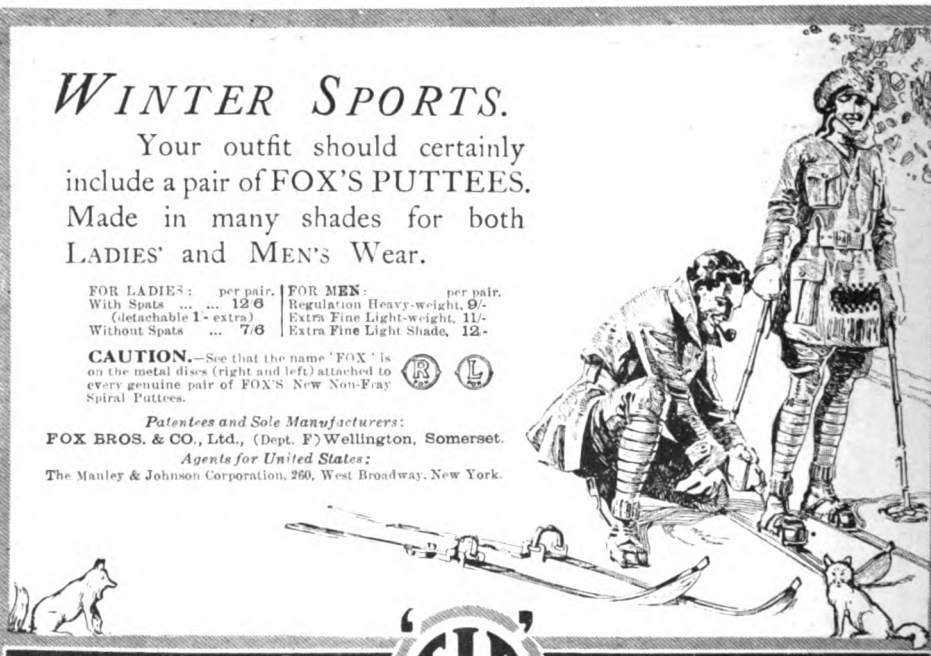
WINTER SPORTS.

Your outfit should certainly include a pair of FOX'S PUTTEES. Made in many shades for both LADIES' and MEN'S Wear.

FOR LADIES: per pair.	FOR MEN: per pair.
With Spats 12/6	Regulation Heavy-weight, 9/-
(detachable 1/- extra)	Extra Fine Light-weight, 11/-
Without Spats ... 7/6	Extra Fine Light Shade, 12/-

CAUTION.—See that the name 'FOX' is on the metal discs (right and left) attached to every genuine pair of FOX'S New Non-Fray Spiral Puttees.

Patentees and Sole Manufacturers:
FOX BROS. & CO., Ltd., (Dept. F) Wellington, Somerset.
Agents for United States:
The Manley & Johnson Corporation, 260, West Broadway, New York.



FOX'S F.I.P. PUTTEES

(F.I.P.—Fox's Improved Puttees) "Non-Fray Spiral."

PLAYER'S NAVY CUT

PLAYER'S NAVY CUT TOBACCO

Packed in varying degrees of strength to suit every class of Smoker. "Beautifully Cool and Sweet Smoking."

PLAYER'S GOLD LEAF NAVY CUT
PLAYER'S MEDIUM NAVY CUT
PLAYER'S TAWNY NAVY CUT
} Per Oz. 1/-

PLAYER'S "WHITE LABEL" NAVY CUT • Per oz. 10½d.

Also Player's NAVY CUT DE LUXE (a development of Player's Navy Cut) packed in 2-oz. and 4-oz. AIRTIGHT TINS at 2/4 and 4/8 respectively.

PLAYER'S NAVY CUT CIGARETTES

Have a world-wide reputation. They are made from fine quality Virginia Tobacco and sold in two strengths—Mild and Medium

MILD (Gold Leaf)	MEDIUM
100 for 5/10; 50 for 2/11	100 for 4/8; 50 for 2/5
24 for 1/5; 12 for 8½d.	20 for 11½d.; 10 for 6d.

In Packets and Tins from all Tobacconists and Stores.

John Player & Sons, Nottingham.

Branch of The Imperial Tobacco Co. (of Great Britain and Ireland), Ltd 1943

Single boot or shoe willingly sent on approval.

If remittance is sent money will be instantly refunded if not approved.

SAY 99

A WINTER BOOT. the uppers are cut from selected box calf. they are calf lined throughout The soles are of Oak Bark tanned leather – the rubber tyred welt renders this boot absolutely waterproof Stocked also with Dri-ped Soles

30/-

A WINTER SHOE cut from supple box-calf. Soft as silk–tough as pin-wire – calf lined throughout, soles fitted with patented rubber tyred welts which renders this shoe absolulety waterproof

30/-

YOU CAN FACE IT ALL WITH A SMILE

—the cheerless, heavy skies, the rain settled in, the streets full of "slush" and the crowds that seem all wet, umbrellas and dripping mackintoshes. It's **then** you appreciate your pair of "99." Their special patented device, the rubber-tyred welt, means warm, dry foot comfort in COLD WET WEATHER.

For Overseas Orders take advantage of the Post Office Cash on Delivery purchasing facilities, or where this is not available you can safely send full amount, as we return all monies if you are not perfectly satisfied.

Write for ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE Post Free.

W. ABBOTT & SONS, LTD., 60, LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C.

(PHIT-EESI)

Also on Sale at:

24, Liverpool Street, E.C.
458, Holloway Road, N.
121, High Holborn, W.C.
54, Regent Street, W.
434, Strand, W.C.
166, Fenchurch Street, E.C.
131a, Queen's Rd., Bayswater.
7, Poultry, City.
98, High Street, Kensington

42/- "Mattamac" (Reg'd.)

You can't *possibly* get wet in the

Feather-weight **Stormproof.**

Don't risk disappointment with an imitation. Get the *genuine* "Mattamac" Stormproof, which is labelled "Mattamac" beneath the Coat-hanger. *That* is your safeguard.

A "Mattamac" is identical in appearance with the usual five-guinea Weatherproof. In utility, also, it equals its much-more-costly Competitor. It wears as long, weighs one-third and is absolutely Waterproof. Light and compact-folding, Wind and Chill proof as well as Wet proof, a "Mattamac" can be used *additionally* as a light Overcoat for Driving, Motoring, Shopping, Watching the Football Match, etc.

WEIGHT 19 ozs.

FOLDS INTO THIS SIZE.

Fits the jacket pocket or Attaché Case.

(**Reg'd. Trade Mark.**)

42/-

For Man, Woman, and Child. Also made for Equestrian, Military, and Sporting Wear.

"Matta" Fabric is exceedingly compact. The coat worn by the 6-ft. man beneath, when folded, just made this handful.

This is an actual photograph of his hand and the "Mattamac" he wears, folded to fit snugly into his jacket pocket or handbag.

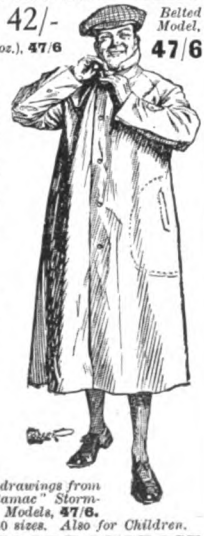
3 OZS. HEAVIER THAN AN UMBRELLA.

Sporting (19 oz.) Model, **42/-**

19 OUNCES WEIGHT 42/-

Belted Models (21½ *oz.*), **47/6**

Belted Model, **47/6**



Colours:— ***Fawn, Olive, Tan, Grey, Black, and Blue Shades.***

Children's Models for all ages at size prices

Equestrian wide-skirted (22 oz.) Model (Fawn and Khaki only).

59/6

With Belt, (24½ *ozs.*), **65/-**

Illustrations are direct drawings from photos of stock "Mattamac" Storm-proofs costing **42/-**; *Belted Models,* **47/6.**

In 6 shades, 11 Adult Models, and 40 sizes. Also for Children.

MADE FOR EVERY OUTDOOR PURPOSE.

Town and Country unbelted Models, in **Fawn, Olive, Grey, Tan, Black,** and **Blue, 42/-**; Belted Models for Adults, **47/6**; Military Models (unbelted **42/-**, belted **47/6**); wide-skirted Equestrian Models from **59/6**; and Children's Models for all ages at size prices. Made entirely from the genuine, warmth-giving, all-weather-proof "Matta" (Reg'd.) Fabric, with wind-cuffs, perpendicular pockets, lined shoulders, Raglan sleeves, roomy "under-arms," and the famous cut of Conduit Street.

"MATTAMAC" ART BOOKLET POST FREE, illustrating Adult and Children's Models. A p.c. brings Booklet and 6 colour Patterns of "Matta" Fabric, or you can safely order now

SENT OUT ON SEVEN DAYS' FREE APPROVAL.

You buy without risk. Send chest measurement **over** waistcoat (Ladies measure over Blouse), height, and remittance, stating colour, and your "Mattamac" will be sent post free in the U.K. (extra abroad). If you are not fully satisfied, you can return it within 7 days of receipt, and get your money back in full. Sold only at the London and Birmingham Showrooms, by certain accredited Provincial Agents, and through the Post from address below. If unable to call, write for "Mattamac" Booklet **"26 B."**

PEARSON BROTHERS

NEW MIDLAND SHOWROOMS (Opposite Corporation St.), 134, NEW ST., BIRMINGHAM.

45, Kingston House, **CONDUIT STREET, LONDON, W.1.**

Nothing

is more annoying than the cheap, inferior laces—as often as not of continental make—that fray and soon look shabby, break quickly and lose their tags.

But why buy them? The finest laces in the world are made by Paton's of Johnstone, Scotland—laces with hundreds of threads in each to give strength; patent fast tags guaranteed not to come off, to prevent annoyance; the best quality dyes used to ensure permanent smartness; and, strangely enough, Paton's Laces don't readily become untied. Try them.

PATON'S BOOT & SHOE LACES

Paton's Laces are sold by all Bootmakers and Repairers at a few coppers per pair, and there are none to equal them.

WM. PATON, LTD., Johnstone. SCOTLAND

℗ P 11

Irish Linen HANDKERCHIEFS

made by Robinson & Cleaver will give real good service—whether dainty lace-edged or plain hemstitched they have no equal. Buy linen handkerchiefs from the linen firm with 50 years' reputation.

No. A.1. Ladies' pure linen hemstitched handkerchiefs, size about 12 inches with ¼ hem. Per dozen **5/4**

No. A.2. Gent's pure linen hemstitched handkerchiefs, size about 17½ inches, ⅜ hem. Per dozen **9/3**

No. A.4. Ladies' pure linen handkerchiefs, embroidered corner, assorted designs in dozen. Per dozen **8/3**

Write for Handkerchief List 36L. Sent post free. Delivery of parcels guaranteed and carriage paid on orders of 20/- upwards in United Kingdom.

ROBINSON & CLEAVER

***Linen Manufacturers,* BELFAST, IRELAND.**

Who said cats and dogs!

RAINING cats and dogs, snowing ink—so we express a phase of our climate that is suffered by some — cheerfully borne by others.

The others?—wearers of footwear soled with 'Dri-ped,' who brave the worst wet days of winter as happily as sunshine days. The secret (if it be a secret now) is in the fact that 'Dri-ped' leather is absolutely waterproof — it gives positive foot protection against chills . . . . and saves the expense cold-combating entails.

Moreover, because 'Dri-ped' leather wears for at least twice as long (often thrice as long) as best ordinary leather of equal thickness, it saves at least 50 per cent. on the family footwear bills.

Walk in comfort in all weathers and reduce the family footwear bills by half

Insist on having

CAUTION.

All genuine 'Dri-ped' Sole Leather bears the 'Dri-ped' purple diamond stamped every few inches on each sole.

Firmly refuse subterfuges DRI-PED REG.

DRI-PED

Guaranteed Double-wear BOOTS AND SHOES

You can obtain 'Dri-ped' soled footwear in all styles and sizes at your retailers. There are smart and serviceable models for men, women and children. Your repairer can sole and heel the boots and shoes you are now wearing with 'Dri-ped.'

℗ 81.

Real Old-Fashioned Home-Made Ginger Wine

Enjoy it before you go out—when you come in.

Centuries ago every English housewife made her own wines. You can to-day revive this pleasant old custom by making Crestona Ginger Wine for yourself. It is a surprisingly delicious drink, which delights young and old alike.

make it yourself the new quick way

CRESTONA GINGER WINE

From all grocers and Harrod's and Selfridge's Stores.

1/- size makes 75 glasses **4½d.** size makes 15 glasses

Makers: BROWNHILL-WHITE LTD., LEEDS.

SEND FOR FREE PATTERNS OF OUR

RIDING BREECHES

CUT TO MEASURE

21/- BEDFORD CORDS, WHIPCORDS, RIDING TWEEDS, GABARDINES, DRILLS, etc.

RIDING SUITS

CUT TO MEASURE

from our STRONG RIDING TWEEDS. Perfect Style, Cut and Fit GUARANTEED from your own measurements. **97/6**

BEDFORD RIDING BREECHES CO.

(Dept. M.S.), 19, NEW QUEBEC STREET, MARBLE ARCH, LONDON, W.1.

(formerly of Great Titchfield Street)

A great little gift

—inexpensive, unique, and life-lasting.

This is the famous "Alpha" **Combined Portable Trouser Press and Suit Hanger.** Almost a necessity to any man with or without an ordinary press. It creases and stretches trousers perfectly, and keeps the whole suit wrinkle-free. Packs into 3 in. x 2 in. x 21½ in., and weighs 20 ozs. There is no better gift for the man who cares for clothes. **Avoid the Xmas rush.** Post Free **8/6** in U.K.

"ALPHA" No. 2 DE LUXE. Polished Walnut Slats. Extra-power Nickelled Springs and Fittings. Hangs on bar or hook. **15/6** (Post Free in United Kingdom).

Cross Cheque or P.O. "London Joint City & Midland Bank, Ltd." **MAY & CO. (Dept. 11), 3, Tudor St., London, E.C.4.**

Obtainable in all popular shapes at **10/6 & 12/6** *from most good tobacconists throughout the world.*

Orlik

Shrewd Judges smoke an Orlik.

This is my BRUYÈRE ANTIQUE

—the Briar that appeals to discerning judges of what pipe-perfection really means. The beautifully grained Briar Root—specially selected for its compactness—is subjected to an exclusive heading and drying process that drives out all moisture from the bowl. No need for "breaking-in"—right from the first pipeful you'll find your Bruyère Antique smoke perfectly. The Genuine Pipe is plainly branded **"ORLIK."**

Trade enquiries to—L. ORLIK, 62, Barbican, London, E.C.1.

Dad's Christmas Present

How one family solved the problem

"What can we give Dad for Christmas?"

It was little Jacky who hit upon the happy idea which solved our biggest Christmas problem.

"Why not, Mother, give Dad a happy surprise and buy him one of those beautiful New Improved Gillette Safety Razors?"

Mother did, and Dad was delighted, and now Jacky looks forward to the time when he will be a big man and have one for himself.

The New Improved Gillette Safety Razor

TRADE Gillette MARK
KNOWN THE WORLD OVER

NEW STANDARD *(as illustrated.)* Triple silver plated New Improved Gillette Safety Razor, Metal Box containing 12 double edge Gillette Blades (24 shaving edges) in Genuine Leather Case, purple velvet and satin lined . **21/-**

Gillette Blades in packets of 12 (24 shaving edges) **4/6**
In packets of 6 (12 shaving edges) - - - - - - **2/3**

Sold by Cutlers, Stores, Ironmongers, Hairdressers, Chemists and Jewellers throughout the country.

Illustrated Booklet sent free on request to:—

GILLETTE SAFETY RAZOR LTD. 184-188 Great Portland St. London, W.1

By appointment to His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.

Women who use Pond's

The Town Girl

Many foes beset the town girl's complexion—fog and grime as well as all the elements — making the use of Pond's Vanishing Cream and Pond's Cold Cream most necessary. Pond's Creams never promote the growth of hair.

Pond's Vanishing Cream disappears instantly into the skin, making it delightfully smooth, soft, and supple. Pond's is an invaluable protective. It is non-sticky and non-greasy, and leaves no trace of use save the delicate fragrance of Jacqueminot roses.

Pond's Cold Cream should be gently massaged into the skin each night on retiring. It effectively cleanses the pores, ridding them of the impurities they have gathered during the day, and, because it supplements the natural oil of the skin, aids in the prevention and obliteration of lines and wrinkles.

"TO SOOTHE AND SMOOTH YOUR SKIN."

Both Creams of all chemists and stores, in handsome opal jars **1/3** *and* **2 6**, *also collapsible tubes* **7½** *d. (handbag size) and* **1 -**

Pond's Cold Cream and Vanishing Cream

POND'S EXTRACT CO. (Dept. 30), 71, Southampton Row, London, W.C.1

BARGAINS IN LINEN REMNANTS

The demand for our remnant bundles of pure linen is increasing daily. Careful housewives appreciate the economic value of these bundles:—

Remnant Bundles of Coloured Art Linen for cushion covers and fancy needlework. Per bundle **8/6**

Remnant Bundles of Best Quality Pillow Linen to make six pillow cases, size 20 x 30 inches. Per bundle **21/-**

Remnant Bundles of White Art Linen for afternoon tea cloths, tray cloths, etc. Per bundle **11/9**

Remnant Bundles of Irish Linen Huckaback Towelling, sufficient to make six full-sized bedroom towels. Per bundle **12/6**

OUR GUARANTEE—Any goods not approved can be returned to be exchanged or money refunded.

For all orders under 20/- add 9d. for postage.

WRITE NOW FOR FREE CATALOGUE.

Hutton's

95, Main Street, LARNE, Ireland.

CAN YOU DRAW?

Learn to Draw Fashions —It is the Best Paying Art Work of To-day.

The Associated Fashion Artists, comprising London's leading fashion artists, give thorough tuition by post in this lucrative art work and assist students to sell their drawings as soon as they are proficient.

Write to-day for the handsome booklet, "The Art of Drawing Charming Women." Enclose 2d. stamp and it will be sent by return. Address your inquiry to:—

THE PRINCIPAL, STUDIO 171,

ASSOCIATED FASHION ARTISTS,

11, New Court, Lincoln's Inn, W.C.2.

GREY HAIR

FOR TRIAL 8D. BOTTLE.

SHADEINE tints Grey Hair any natural tint from BLONDE to BLACK, AUBURN or GOLDEN, is sold in all colours, is perfectly harmless, contains no lead, silver, mercury, etc. Copy of Medical certificate enclosed. Cannot produce unnatural tints. State colour required. **Trial bottle, 8d.**, per post 11d.; **1/4**, post 1/8; **2/6**, post 2/11; **3/9**, post 4/6

SHADEINE CO.

DEPT. S.T.

TRY 58, T. WESTBOURNE GROVE, LONDON, W.

SHADEINE

Watch them

Keep the film off their teeth

Pepsodent is largely for the coming generation. It brings to adults whiter teeth, new protection. But to children it means a new dental era.

Your teeth, perhaps, have always been film coated, except directly after dental cleaning. The lustre has been dimmed by film. You have failed to remove it despite daily brushing, and decay may have been caused.

Now dental authorities urge you to fight film. Above all, have your children fight it daily in this scientific way.

Makes teeth dingy

Modern science reveals that most tooth troubles have a potential origin in film—in that viscous film you feel. It clings to teeth, enters crevices and remains.

It absorbs stains, making the teeth look dingy. Film is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth and the acid may cause decay.

Dental science has for years been seeking a way to daily combat that film. It is the teeth's great enemy.

Two ways now found

Two effective film combatants have been found. Able authorities have subjected them to many careful tests. Dental science now approves them, and leading dentists, here and abroad, urge their daily use.

A new-day tooth paste has been perfected, complying with modern requirements. It is called Pepsodent. And these two film-combating methods are embodied in it.

Also starch deposits

Starch deposits also attack teeth. In fermenting they form acids.

Nature puts a starch digestant in the saliva. It puts alkalis there to neutralize the acids.

Pepsodent multiplies that starch digestant, also the alkalinity. Thus Nature's teeth-protecting forces are multiplied.

Thus twice a day, in all these ways, Pepsodent protects the teeth as never before.

Millions of people now use Pepsodent, largely by dental advice. Anyone who once employs it can see and feel its need.

Watch the added beauty

Send the coupon for a 10-day test. Note how clean the teeth feel after using. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as the film-coats disappear.

The lasting benefits appear more slowly. But all who love clean glistening teeth will see effects at once. And the book we send explains the reasons for them.

The glistening teeth you see everywhere now are largely due to Pepsodent. Learn how you can attain them. Cut out the coupon now.

Pepsodent TRADE MARK

now made in

Two Sizes

1/3 & 2/-

Pepsodent TRADE MARK

The New-Day Dentifrice

The scientific film combatant, approved by modern authorities, and now advised by leading dentists everywhere. Each use brings five desired effects. All chemists and druggists supply it in two sizes—1/3 and 2/-

S. African distributors: Verrinder, Ltd., P.O. Box 6824, Johannesburg, to whom S.A. residents may send coupon.

833

10-DAY TUBE FREE.

THE PEPSODENT COMPANY,
(Dept. 131) 40, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C. 1.

Mail 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent to—

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Give full address. Write plainly
Only one tube to a family. STRAND MAG./Dec

THE CELEBRATED

Bébé WATCH BRACELET

The Trade Mark which appears on every watch is a Guarantee of Quality.

15 Ruby Jewels. Compensated Balance Lever escapement. Damaskeened movement. Extra Heavy English Hall-marked Solid Gold Case. Solid Gold Bracelet. No Snap required. Will fit any wrist.

Sent on approval. Cash returned if not approved.

10 YEARS GUARANTEE & 100 YEARS REPUTATION BEHIND IT

£3/10/0
Solid Gold Bracelet
Superior to any £5 Watch.

IN A VARIETY OF FANCY DIALS

£2/10/0
With Moire Silk Band

Bravingtons

296-298 PENTONVILLE ROAD, KINGS CROSS, N.1
Closed Thursday at 1 p.m.—Open Saturday till 8.30 p.m.

71, LUDGATE HILL, E.C.4.
Closed Saturday at 1 p.m.—Open Thursday till 7.0 p.m.

THE WYCOMBE SUPER EASY CHAIRS & SETTEES

92/6 CARR. PAID
Over wide area.

Sold on Money Back Terms

BUY HER, OR HIM, A "WYCOMBE" for XMAS

This large Grandfather's Wing Chair is now supplied at Cash Price **£4-12s.-6d.**, or first Cash Payment of **19/6** and balance in 5 monthly payments. Three-piece Suites, consisting of 2 large Wing Easy Chairs and Settee to match, **£18-5s.** Cash or **£4-5s.** Cash and balance in 5 or 12 monthly payments.

Beautiful design, imposing appearance, covered in expensive Tapestries, etc.; thoroughly upholstered and sprung all over, they are the most wonderful Chair value in the world.

Made in our own factories and sold direct to the customer, who thus saves the big profit of the middle man. Illus. list post free.

BUCKS FURNITURE MANUFACTURING CO.,
"The Factory Direct People,"
Dept. 92, BAKER STREET, LONDON, W.1.

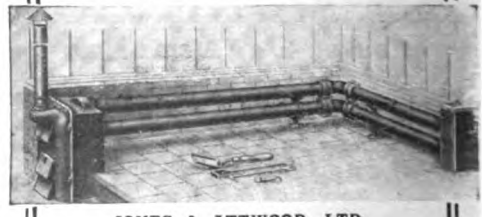
A Riot of Colour in winter

Protect your choice plants and blooms from winter's elements this year by installing the CULTIVATUM GREENHOUSE APPARATUS. This system, considered by experts to be the most efficient and economical ever produced, gives consistent well-regulated heat on a marvellously low fuel consumption.

The Cultivatum

This apparatus has been used with great success by professional and amateur horticulturists throughout the country. It needs little attention—the fire can be stoked to last throughout the night. It is of good appearance, and can be used with equal efficiency for heating garages, etc.

Write for explanatory booklet.



JONES & ATTWOOD, LTD.
Gardeners Works,
STOURBRIDGE.

New Nursery Rhymes for Old
Here Mother Goose on Winter Nights
The Old and Young she both Delights
(With bits the Advertiser Writes.)
Chap Book, 1817 Revised

Monday's child is fair of face
Tuesday's child is full of grace
Wednesday's child is full of woe
Thursday's child has far to go
Friday's child is loving & giving
Saturday's child works hard for her living
But the child that is born on the Sabbath Day
Is bonny & blithe & good & gay.

WRIGHTS COAL TAR SOAP

The Nursery Soap

7d per Tablet
Box of 3 Tablets 1/9
Bath Tablets (double size) 1/- per Tablet
Box of 3 Tablets 3/-

Protects from Infection

RIDE a-cock horse to . . . LEICESTER, of course,
To see the fair city, of CHILPRUFE the source.
She can go if it rains, she can go if it snows;
But she MUST have her CHILPRUFE whenever she goes.

There's nothing like CHILPRUFE to keep her from harm,
So happy and healthy, so cosy and warm.
She should wear it at home, she should wear it at school;
She should ***always*** *wear CHILPRUFE, because it's PURE WOOL.*

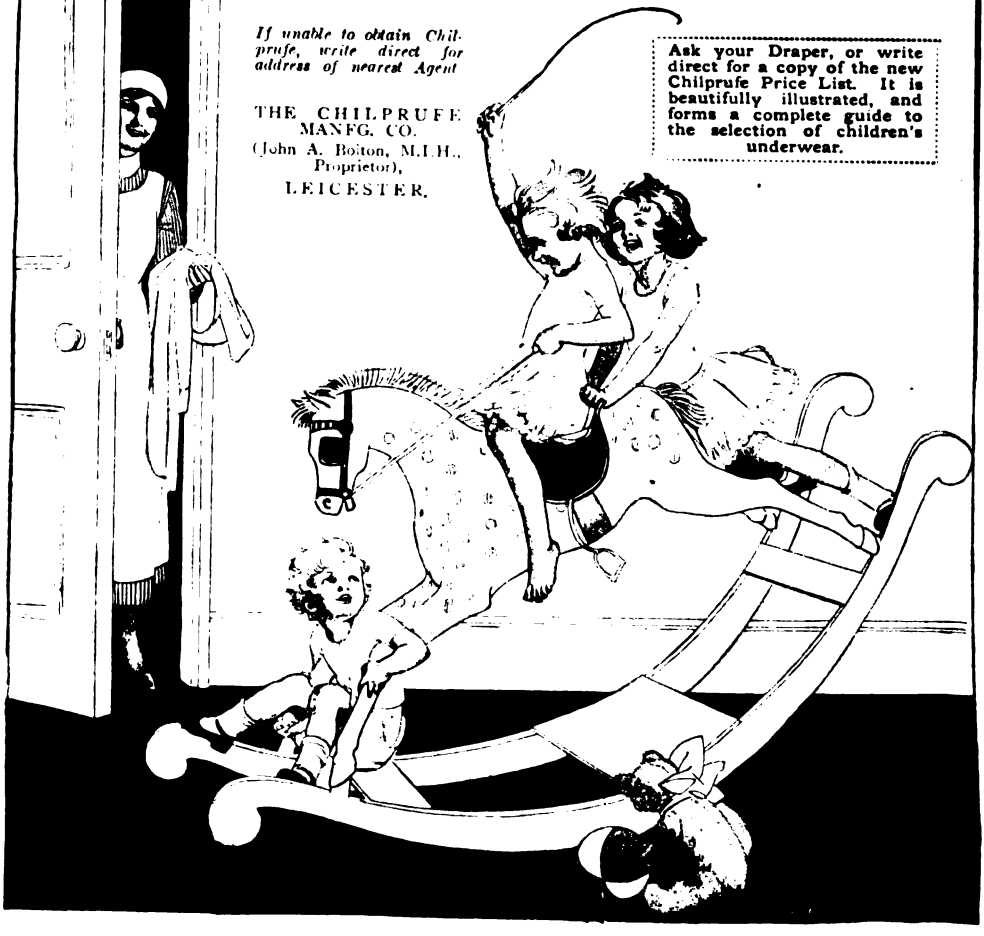
CHILPRUFE for CHILDREN

Regd.

IS THE SUREST SAFEGUARD AGAINST EVERY RISK TO HEALTH FROM WEATHER AND TEMPERATURE CHANGES

CHILPRUFE for CHILDREN

consists solely of the PUREST WOOL—the finest natural protective covering in the world—finished by *a secret process.* This exclusive treatment removes all the heaviness and irritation associated with ordinary wools, and makes CHILPRUFE beautifully light, soft and dainty—a solace to sensitive skins. At the same time it renders CHILPRUFE wonderfully protective.



If unable to obtain Chilprufe, write direct for address of nearest Agent

THE CHILPRUFE MANFG. CO.
(John A. Bolton, M.I.H., Proprietor),
LEICESTER.

Ask your Draper, or write direct for a copy of the new Chilprufe Price List. It is beautifully illustrated, and forms a complete guide to the selection of children's underwear.

Polly, put the kettle on,
Polly, put the kettle on,
Polly, put the kettle on,
And let's drink tea.

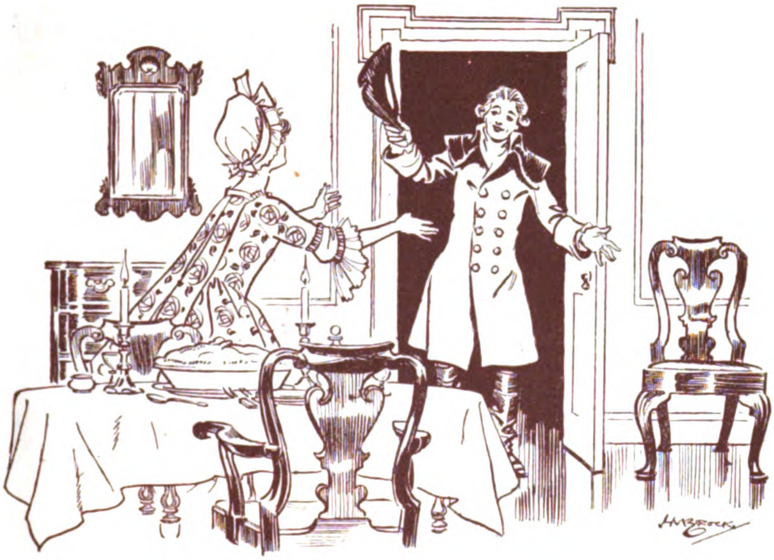
□ □ □

Polly, get the teapot,
Put the Mazawattee in,
That's the brand that makes us
The very finest tea.

□ □ □

Polly, pass the teapot,
Just one more cup for me,
Nothing could be nicer
Than

MAZAWATTEE TEA



Sing a song of RONUK,
Housewives all agree,
Here's the stuff to make your floors
Shine continually.
When the door is opened
Brightness meets your sight,
What a highly polished home
To welcome you at night!

RONUK

FLOOR POLISH

POLISHES, PRESERVES, PURIFIES.

For your Furniture, use RONUK FURNITURE CREAM.

When buying RONUK, ask to see that wonderful labour-saving device, the RONUK HOME POLISHER.

Sold Everywhere. Manufactured by RONUK, Ltd., Portslade, Sussex.

High! High! see the airman fly,
Twisting and turning up in the sky,
The "joystick" gripped in his strong right hand,
Keeps him aloft or brings him to land.

Ho! Ho! on the earth below,
What is it makes the brave airman's face glow?
See him open a packet, see him smile, see him puff,
Of Morris's "Joysticks" he can't smoke enough.

"*Joystick*" Cigarettes are doing well!

IT'S their fine flavour — skilfully blended pure Tobaccos make such a difference— and their uniform well-filled size. North, South, East and West "***Joystick*** Cigarettes" are making lifelong friends. Everyone says they're wonderful at

6d. *for* **10** *or* **11½d.** *for* **20**

of all tobacconists.

B. MORRIS & SONS, Ltd., London, E.

HURCULACES

One ! Two ! Tie up my shoe,
Now Fido behaves just as
naughty dogs do.
He bites and he tugs
To show off his paces,
But he cannot destroy
My new Hurculaces.
They're sturdy and steadfast,
They'll ne'er break or tear ;
And are known as the laces
Of extra long wear.

HURCULACES are made in many varieties for Ladies', Men's and Children's Boots and Shoes in all the popular shades.

Ask for HURCULACES and you know that you are getting the best possible value for your money ; prove for yourself that they are THE LACES WITH THE EXTRA LONG WEAR.

Stocked by the leading Boot Shops, Drapers and Outfitters.

Manufactured by FAIRE BROS. & CO., Ltd., LEICESTER.

You can't break these Doggie – they're *Hurculaces!*

HURCULACES

THE LACE WITH THE EXTRA LONG WEAR...

Messrs. John Mackintosh & Sons, Ltd., invite **"Strand Magazine" Readers** to share the pleasure of a great Christmas Gift to over **100,000** poor kiddies.

Happiness for Everyone!

How you can help to make the wish come true.

On Christmas morning your kiddies' stockings will be crammed with good things. Some kiddies' stockings will be provided for less generously.

To bring happiness to over one hundred thousand poor kiddies whom Santa Claus may otherwise neglect we are distributing on your behalf Holly Bags of Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe.

All you have to do to share in this scheme is :—

(1) Buy one lb. of Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe.

(2) Fill in the "Happiness Coupon" printed below.

(3) Hand the coupon to your confectioner or post it to the address on the coupon—then we will put aside for distribution as *your gift* one Holly Bag. And for every lb. of any of the Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe varieties you buy we will give on your behalf one Holly Bag *provided you comply with these simple conditions.*

The Editor of the "Strand Magazine" has nominated Dr. Barnardo's Homes to distribute Holly Bags for "Strand Magazine" readers.

All "Happiness Coupons" should be posted or handed to your confectioner before or not later than December 16. Holly Bags for coupons received later will be sent as New Year Gifts.

Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe.

No Holly Bag can be sent to individuals; no "Happiness Coupons" can be acknowledged—a general acknowledgment will be published early in January.

NOTE TO CONFECTIONERS :— You are invited to co-operate by sending coupons handed to you over the counter to John Mackintosh & Sons, Ltd, Halifax, in weekly batches. All postage costs incurred will be refunded promptly.

"STRAND MAGAZINE"

HAPPINESS COUPON.

I have to-day purchased .....lb(s). of Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe. Please distribute on my behalf .....Holly Bag(s).

Name.....

Address.....

Shopkeeper's Name .....

Address.....

TO BE SIGNED BY SHOPKEEPER.

POST THIS COUPON IN AN UNSEALED ENVELOPE WITH ½d STAMP.

Post to "Happiness Scheme," John Mackintosh & Sons, Ltd., Toffee Town, Halifax, or hand to the Confectioner who sells you Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe.

Specially for "H.M. The Baby"

Why not send an Otterburn Baby Rug this Christmas?

For the Home where there's a Baby, you could not send a more happy, more suitable Christmas gift than the parcel of Otterburn snuggle-comfort for Baby.

Baby can do no more than "crow" its appreciation, but Baby's Mother will think with pleasure, each day, of your thoughtfulness. *Every hour* of the twenty-four gives the Otterburn Baby Rug an opportunity to show how cosy and comforting it *can* be.

Otterburn Baby Rugs are made with scrupulous care from pure, new, fleecy neck-and-shoulder wool from hardy Cheviot sheep. What more fitting for Baby's welfare than this soft, warm wool—the generous protection given by Nature to the sheep on the bleak hills of the Borderland?

Waking or sleeping, Baby could not have a more faithful guardian against chills and ills than this honest Otterburn Rug. Substantial, yet by no means heavy; warm, yet not "stuffy," the "Otterburn" lasts for years and washes excellently. For Cot or Cradle it makes a cosy blanket; when Baby "walks out" it does protecting duty as a Pram Rug; indoors it makes the snuggest Nursing Wrap.

Ever since their origin in 1821 *all* Otterburn products have been esteemed for sheer goodness and integrity of manufacture. To-day the selection of fleeces, manufacturing, dyeing, and finishing are personally supervised by Waddells of the third and fourth generations. Their working principles are just the same full-of-conscience *honest* ones as those laid down by their Forbear—the first Wm. Waddell—a hundred and one years ago.

Make your Gift an "Otterburn."

If *you* know a House where H.M. The Baby reigns, you can gladden it with an "Otterburn." Ask your Draper for an Otterburn Baby Rug—*with the little Silk Tab.* If he cannot supply, just send 13/11 to the address below and, by return, we will send along a Rug, in the Colour you specify.

For your convenience, we will despatch the Rug (carefully and securely packed) to your instructions, either to your address or direct to Baby's address. When you send your instructions, please mention your Dealer's name and address, so that we can credit him with the sale.

13/11 Otterburn Rug

Made from Neck-and-Shoulder New Cheviot Wool

Sold by Drapers, Pram Sellers, and Baby-wear Shops; or direct, post free.

A Warning.

The silk woven tab showing the old Mill is stitched on each genuine Otterburn Rug. Look for it always. If you are offered an imitation, say "No" firmly; take no chances with Baby's Health and Comfort.

Note our Address, to which all communications should be sent—

Otterburn Mill, Ltd.,
Otterburn, Northumberland.

PRODUCT OF Otterburn Mill Ltd PURE WOOL REG. TRADE MARK

This silk-woven label is stitched to every genuine Otterburn Baby Rug.

Actual photograph of the Otterburn Baby Rug; suitable for Pram, Cot, Cradle, or as a Nursing Wrap. Size 30 ins. by 36 ins., fringed at ends. Colours: Cream, Grey, Sky, Saxe, Rose, Navy, and Biscuit.

13/11

The "Fleece" Waistcoat
for Ideal Warmth and Comfort

Undyed Camelhair with Self-back,
42/- & 45/-

Various shades of Undyed Alpaca, Dyed Wool and Dyed Camelhair,
39/6 & 42/-

JAEGER
Pure Wool

LONDON DEPOTS:
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Jaeger Agents in every town and throughout the British Empire.

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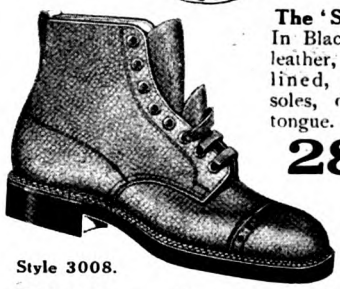

The 'SAXUS'
In Black Grain leather, leather lined, double soles, double tongue.
28/-

Style 3008.

TAKE an ordinary boot and double it. Then you have this boot. Double soles, double tongue, leather lined—two boots in one for the price of one. A boot which defies the worst climate.

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SAXONE
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Put a
PERMANENT CREASE
in your trousers

You can do it with "Wray's Evercrease" in a few minutes. "Evercrease" is **safe, permanent** and **waterproof** —cannot harm any cloth and will keep your trousers smart all through their life. One tube of "Evercrease" will **permanently** crease three pairs of trousers. Price **1/6** per tube, light or dark, according to colour of cloth.

WRAY'S EVERCREASE

Obtainable from all leading Stores, Chemists, Outfitters, and Hairdressers

Or **1/8** post free from
E. S. WRAY & SON,
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London, W.C.2.

The "Featherweight" FOLDING Suit or Costume Hanger

When open the bottom bar takes the trousers or skirt. The top is specially shaped to preserve the form and style of the garments. The only **FOLDING** hanger to take complete suit or costume. Plated mountings. Beautifully finished stove black enamelled. Ideal Xmas, Birthday, or Wedding present.

Sample and illustrated list of other FOLDING Garment Hangers **2/3**
(Closed.)

Trade enquiries invited.
Two in a fancy leather case **7/6**

(Open.)

S DEW
"Fashion House,"
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CLARNICO

Father Mother Girls and Boys Here's the source of Xmas joys

The best way to *ensure* a "Merry Christmas" is to buy a 4-lb. tin of this delicious new Clarnico sweet. Then call all the party around you and "broadcast" the contents.

Clarnico Lily Brazils (the new confection) are a delicious blend of choice Brazil-nut kernels with sparkling cane sugar, rich butter and full-cream milk.

Per **8d.** ¼ lb.

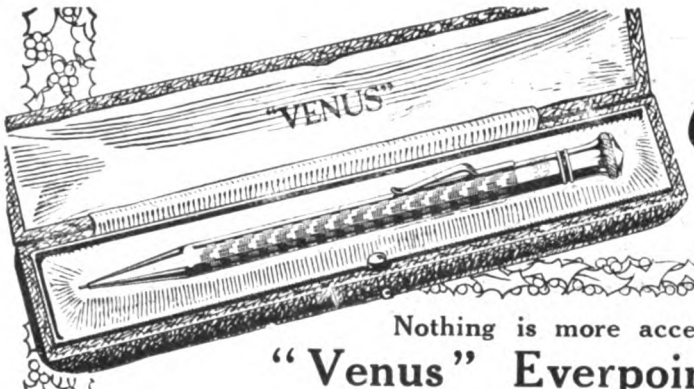
Of all Confectioners.

Get an extra supply for Christmas and ensure a jolly good time.

Made by
CLARKE, NICKOLLS & COOMBS, Ltd., Victoria Park, London.
Founded in 1872.

CLARNICO
LILY BRAZILS
THE NEW CONFECTION

CLARNICO LILY BRAZILS



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Nothing is more acceptable than a

"Venus" Everpointed Pencil.

Handsome and stylish, its excellent appearance is equalled by its perfect accomplishment. The simplicity of operation and the trustworthiness of the whole mechanism have placed THE VENUS EVERPOINTED PENCIL ahead of all others.

VENUS No 38
THIN LEADS

For refills—made in the following gradations: 2B, B, HB, F, H, 2H, 4H, 12 in box, 1/-. Of all Stationers. ***Write us for free sample box.***

The VENUS EVERPOINTED PENCIL

is obtainable everywhere of Stationers and Jewellers in various styles for the most varied tastes—from 7/- upwards. Write us for Booklet.

VENUS, LOWER CLAPTON ROAD, E.5.

This Sketch

was drawn by a former Press Art School Pupil who is now a prominent Illustrator. His adequate little pen-note makes a pleasing example of the *characterful* work my Postal Courses teach. Recently he wrote me:—

"I have got to the four figure stage now. It is hard work, but it would have been infinitely harder had it not been for your kindly advice and assistance."

If you have the wish to Draw *you* can learn to Sketch easily and pleasantly. You will certainly find it a most fascinating Hobby, and, quite probably, a profitable one too. Write for my

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It fully describes my Postal Tuition, arranged in easy and short Courses to suit *individual* needs. The requirements of the Raw Beginner and of the Young Professional lacking finish are covered with equal care.

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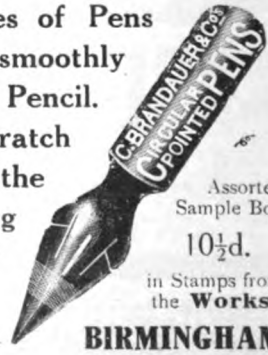
These Series of Pens write as smoothly as a Lead Pencil. Neither Scratch nor Spurt, the Points being rounded by a Special Process.



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Underwear that lets you forget.

WHAT a joy is PESCO! Pure Wool absolutely, and perfect to the last detail. It is the happy choice that leaves you care-free as to health, and gives you so much comfort that you may forget its very presence.

This is the sort of Underwear well-dressed ladies are seeking nowadays and it supplies their need. A fine example of the excellence of Scottish knitted goods, its superb quality, silky softness, graceful outline and charming appearance appeal to all who would wear a genuine article and enjoy real satisfaction.

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ASK FOR PESCO!
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A charming and inexpensive Gift is the GIFT BOX of PESCO HOSIERY. Containing three pairs of Ladies' "Pesco" Pure Wool Hose of superb quality (Black or Coloured, in any size) there is no more suitable Gift at a moderate price.

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Musterole is easy to apply and it gets in its good work immediately. Often it prevents a cold from turning into "flu" or pneumonia. Just apply Musterole with the fingers. Being highly concentrated, a very little Musterole is sufficient to bring relief. Treat a cold for a penny.

Musterole is a clean, white ointment made of oil of mustard and other homely simples. It is used without padding or wadding, lets your body breathe. Try Musterole for sore throat, bronchitis, tonsilitis, croup, stiff neck, asthma, neuralgia, headache, congestion, pleurisy, rheumatism, lumbago, pains or aches of the back or joints, sprains, sore muscles, bruises, chilblains, colds on the chest.

Of all chemists; a 2/6 jar often lasts a family for months.

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MUSTEROLE
WILL NOT BLISTER

OAK STAIR RODS & EYES

COMPLETE CARR. PAID FROM 12/6 DOZ.

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A superfine quality face powder of the highest quality, extra fine and adherent, and luxuriously perfumed with the fascinating fragrance of the Freesia Flower.

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Of all Chemists and Stores and from

YARDLEY & CO., LTD.,
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Ensure your garments being safely returned from the wash by marking them with

CASH'S WOVEN NAMES

The neatest and most efficient method of marking linen.

Woven on fine Cambric Tape in fast turkey red, black, green, gold, helio, sky or navy blue lettering.

PRICES:

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Compton Mackenzie — **Style No. 152**

To be obtained of all Drapers and Outfitters.

WRITE FOR SAMPLES and complete list of the many styles in which these Names can be woven to—

J. & J. CASH, Ltd. (Dept. A4), COVENTRY

CASH'S WASH RIBBONS—Made in Plain and Brocaded effects in White, Blue, Pink, Heliotrope and Maize. Fast Colours.

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The only Guaranteed Seasick Cure in the World

Mothersill's SEASICK REMEDY

will prevent and cure sea-sickness, train-sickness or air-sickness or money refunded

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OLD HATS MADE NEW

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Save money by sending your old **VELOUR, BEAVER, FELT, STRAW** or **PANAMA** hat to the Renovating Expert—**A. WRIGHT, of Luton.** His clever workers will quickly transform your old hat—completely renovate, re-model, and return it equal to a new West End Creation. Send for Free Catalogue of **60 styles** of latest fashionable shapes. Ladies can then choose the design to which they wish their old hat remodelled and made fashionable. The cost is only **2/9** to **4/3.** *(If required, hats can be re-dyed to darker colours, preference should be given to Black, Navy, or Nigger, at an extra cost of* **1/6** *each.)* Gent.'s Hats also renovated—**4/6** to **6/-.** We are the **largest** Hat Renovators in the Country.

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Satisfaction Guaranteed or Money Refunded.

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The Home Beautiful

Telegrams: "GREATLY, LONDON." *Telephone:* Battersea 300 (4 lines).

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TAPESTRIES in good qualities and colourings, from **4/11** to **18/11** per yd.

RICH CORD VELOUR in specially dyed shades, **8/9** per yd., 50 ins. wide.

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Comfortable well-upholstered Easy Chair, with loose cushion in seat. Covered in Damask at **9/11** per yd., in rose, green, blue or wine. **£5 17 6.**

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Decorative Curtain of heavy quality Serge, in various colours, with an effective Tapestry Border. 3½ yds. long, **27/6** per pair.

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Resist Tropical Sun. — Sea Air and Washing

UNFADABLE FABRICS

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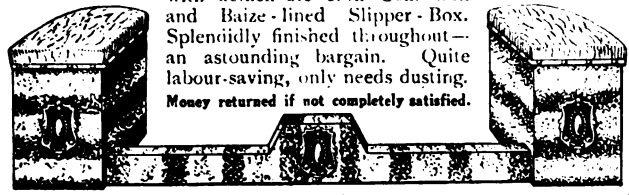
Only **50/-** Carriage paid in England.

Made in antique Copper or Brass, upholstered in Blue, Brown, Red or Green Rexine. Instantly adjustable to fit any hearth, and complete with detachable Iron Coal Box and Baize-lined Slipper-Box. Splendidly finished throughout—an astounding bargain. Quite labour-saving, only needs dusting.

Money returned if not completely satisfied.

Customer writes: "Satisfied beyond expectation."



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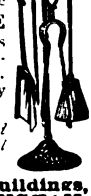
THIS HANDSOME 4-WAY COMPANION SET or a beautifully designed **VELVET PILE HEARTH RUG,** 54 ins. by 27 ins., will be **INCLUDED FREE** with the first hundred orders received for the competition-defying Box Kerb illust'd. Can be supplied separately at **12/6** each.



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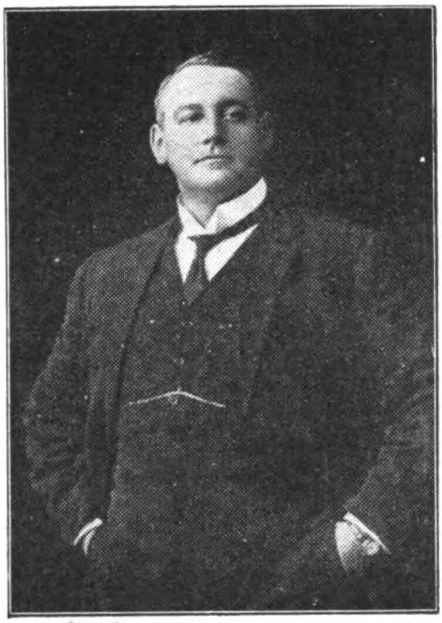

I CURE WEAK NERVES!

I cordially invite every reader of the STRAND MAGAZINE who suffers from nerve weakness or ill-health of any description to write at once for my FREE BOOK on nerve trouble.

I can positively cure sleeplessness, the worry habit, irritability, palpitation, sudden exhaustion, heaviness of limbs, or, in fact, any HEART, NERVE, or STOMACH TROUBLE.

If you are pessimistic, lacking in ambition, or without the energy to carry out your ambitions or perform your work satisfactorily, if everything seems a trial and a care instead of a joy and pleasure, it is a sure sign that you have become *neurasthenic*. In such case, you cannot possibly become the social or business success you were meant to be until you have regained health and fitness.

There is only one sure and certain method in the world to-day —THE INCH HOME TREATMENT. Pleasant and inexpensive, with results *PERMANENT*, it is worth its weight in Treasury notes to the nerve sufferer. If you have tried other methods without satisfaction, *don't hesitate*, write TO-DAY—that is the kind of case I like to get.

I hold thousands of testimonials from patients who could not last through an entertainment or stay in a crowd until they came to me. My treatment was put to a severe test during the war with numbers of shell-shock cases—the worst form of neurasthenia it is possible to have.

Remember, without treatment, nerve trouble usually ends in a nervous breakdown, after which a cure is more difficult to obtain.

TO THE MIDDLE-AGED.

I hold extraordinary testimonials from pupils over the age of sixty as to the wonderful rejuvenating powers of my treatment. I can add years to the life of all middle-aged patients, and at the same time give them renewed vigour. All letters treated in strict confidence. No charge for diagnosis or opinion.

All interested in the foregoing are invited to send a 3d. stamp and ask for "NERVE BOOKLET."

"HEALTH, STRENGTH, AND DEVELOPMENT."

The above is the title of an illustrated booklet showing how health, strength, and development can be improved out of all knowledge. This particularly appeals to the sportsman, the golfer who would improve at his game, the tennis player, boxer, cyclist, or motorist. The "H. S. D." system guarantees improved development and perfect health, cures rounded shoulders, flat chest, spinal curvature, and increases the height.

Only One Booklet sent to each applicant.

Please make it perfectly clear which booklet is required. Write to-day—"Health is the first wealth."

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To Particular Men

Tailorcraft at its best is yours wherever you may reside through GROVES & LINDLEY'S Super-tailor Service by Mail. Individual study is given to every garment by cutters specially trained in post-order tailoring, every vital part is hand-worked by man tailors, and the cloths are the best pure wool fabrics produced by Britain's most famous mills.

By cutting out all middlemen's profits, and dealing direct, Groves & Lindley's HIGHEST PRICE for a stylish Overcoat in Ascot or Chesterfield Style is only **£6 10s.** *Equally well-tailored overcoats from* **77/-**. *Highest Price for Lounge Suit* **£7**. *Lowest Price* **£4 4s.** *Cloth by the yard also supplied on equally good terms.*

Write for over 100 Cloth Patterns Post Free. And illustrated Catalogue of London Styles for men. Measurement Chart and self-measure instructions also included.

Satisfaction with Fit and Value or Cash Refund Guaranteed.

Groves & Lindley,
Exporters of Cloth and Clothing,
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To drive out a cold take a

Mustard Bath

A couple of tablespoonsful or so of COLMAN'S D.S.F. MUSTARD or the contents of a carton of their Bath Mustard.

10 YEARS' WEAR!

Jute Soles last much longer than any others for Indoors, Backyard, etc. Mr. D. F., 2, Lynmouth Road, Reading, writes: "Last pair nearly 10 years in use."

5% See below.

Easiest to feet. Warm and yielding in use. No nails.

State size and colour.	Prices (post free). Children's.	Ladies'.	Gents'.
Colour—Brown, Black, or White.			
A. Plain Shoes (without Strapping) ..	3/11	4/2	4/4
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Superior Blocked, no strapping (Boots 1s. Extra)		6/6	7/-
Felt Slippers, Jute Soles, Warm Lined ..	3/3	4/-	4/3

Football Boots, Boys' 2 to 5, **11/6**. Men's, **12/6**.

Special Prices for Hospitals, Homes, School Drill, etc.

If three pairs, reduction of 2d.; six pairs, 3d. per pair. Full list, 1d.

5% discount on all orders 5/- and upwards as Xmas Gift, to end 1922.

Established over 30 years.

PATENT SHOE CO., 1, STEPS ROAD, near GLASGOW.

IF RHEUMATIC DISSOLVE THIS IN YOUR MORNING TEA

Then watch the pains, aches, swellings, stiffness and other misery disappear. They simply HAVE to go, says ALICE LANDLES, certified nurse.

RHEUMATISM can be caused in but one way. That is by acids and impurities in the blood. It is a universally admitted and easily provable fact that various organic or other ills and weaknesses are directly due to toxins, germs, acids, or other impurities. For instance, uric acid causes gout, sciatica, neuritis, etc., whereas stomach acids cause dyspepsia. In fact, most other ailments—ranging all the way from tuberculosis to a common cold—have definitely been traced to blood impurities, germs and toxins of one kind or another. Chemical analysis and microscopic examination of the blood prove this beyond the possibility of doubt or argument, as any standard medical work will explain in detail. Of course, various conditions, such as exposure to cold and dampness, or committing certain errors of diet, can make rheumatism worse, but the primary cause always remains the same. Therefore, trying to get rid of rheumatism without ridding your blood and system of the acidulous impurities which directly cause this physical calamity, is exactly like trying to get rid of smoke without putting out the fire. Pain-causing and kidney-irritating uric acid is no different from any other acid in that *it must be neutralised by an alkaline liquid.* Nothing else can have just the same effect, this being an elementary principle of chemistry, of course. It naturally follows that to dissolve, neutralise and wash out the rheumatic acids the liquids you drink must contain the necessary alkaline elements to be absorbed into the blood and act upon the acids.

ALICE LANDLES, Certified Nurse.

If you could only look into the kidneys and see the appalling amount of damage inflicted upon the delicate cells by uric acid and other impurities! About a quart of blood passes through every twenty seconds, and healthy kidneys normally filter out of this and excrete during every twenty-four hours more than an ounce of uric acid, lime, urate of soda, and various other mineral impurities in solution. The trouble is that these acids, mineral salts, etc., accumulate rapidly, and *do not stay in solution* when weakened or deranged kidneys stop filtering them out regularly. Instead of remaining melted and in liquid form *they deposit as tiny sharp crystals.* These grind about in the blood vessels, greatly irritate the kidneys, and lodge in joints or tissues, also in certain nerve sheaths, particularly those of the back and legs. As already stated, blood analysis and the microscope prove this conclusively. A still better way to prove it is by drinking a medicinal water containing strongly alkaline elements, which are soon absorbed into the blood and quickly dissolve, neutralise and wash the acids and impurities out through the kidneys. The pains will naturally have to disappear with the acids and toxins which cause them. Non-alkaline preparations cannot possibly produce the same results, because uric acid, like other acids, is neutralised only by an alkaline substance. A level teaspoonful or less of the refined Alkia Saltrates compound (powder form) dissolved in a tumbler of hot water (or better still, in your tea) and taken before breakfast is all you need, and it is pleasant to drink, having no bitter, sour, salty or other objectionable taste. Any good chemist can supply a few ounces of this compound at very little cost.

Typical specimen of uric acid crystals, highly magnified. No wonder they hurt.

IF YOUR KIDNEYS ONLY HAD WINDOWS.

Then the cause of Backache, Rheumatism, Gout, Sciatica, Lumbago, Neuritis, Bright's Disease, Dropsy, Diabetes, etc., would be no mystery and you would know what to do.

SPECIAL NOTE.—We are informed by Saltrates, Ltd. (Dept. 61.N.), Euston Buildings, London, N.W.1, who prepare a very high grade of Alkia Saltrates, that they are willing, as an advertising offer, to supply anyone interested in the product, with a regular 1s. 9d. *size packet free if applicant cares to send sixpence for postage, package, etc.*

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Send to-day for the splendid art Lists.

The long evenings and dull, wet days of winter teem with delight when the home possesses a "Riley" Billiard Table. The fascination of the game—the keen rivalry it stimulates, and the healthy recreation it affords, make the time pass all too quickly.

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Riley's 'Home' Billiard Table.

Illustration shows how comfortably it rests on ordinary dining table. Solid mahogany. Best slate bed, frost-proof cushions and all accessories.

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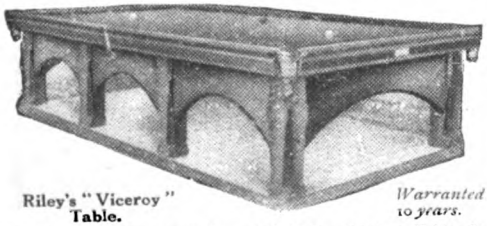

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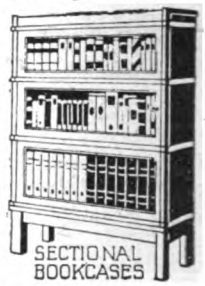
Two very acceptable XMAS GIFTS



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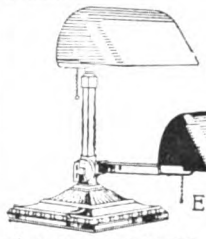

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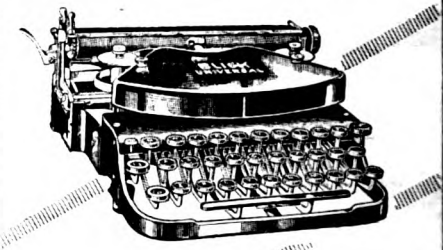

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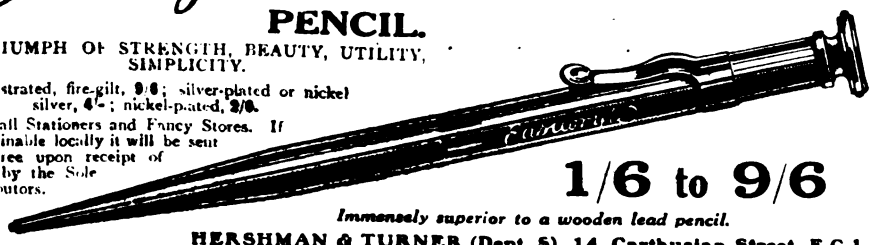

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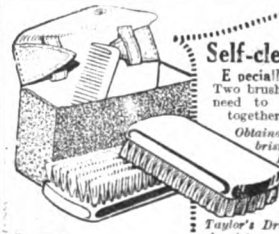

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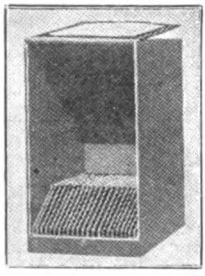

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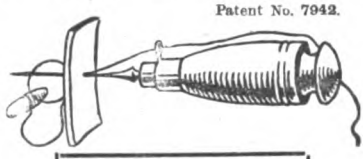

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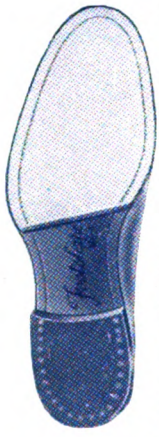

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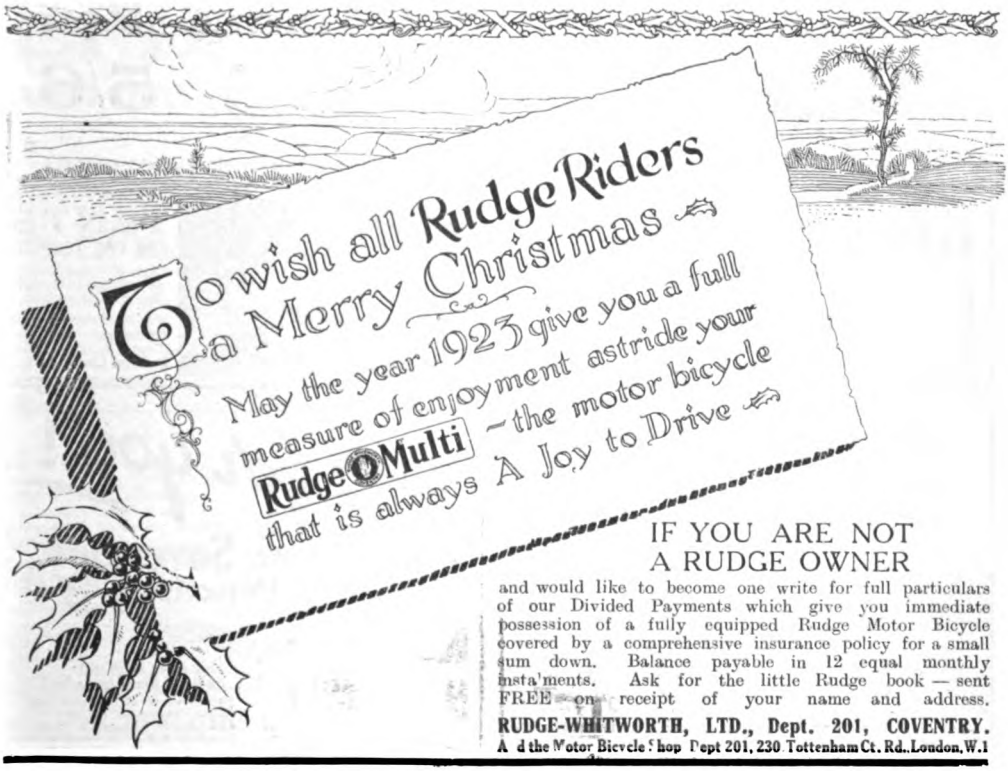

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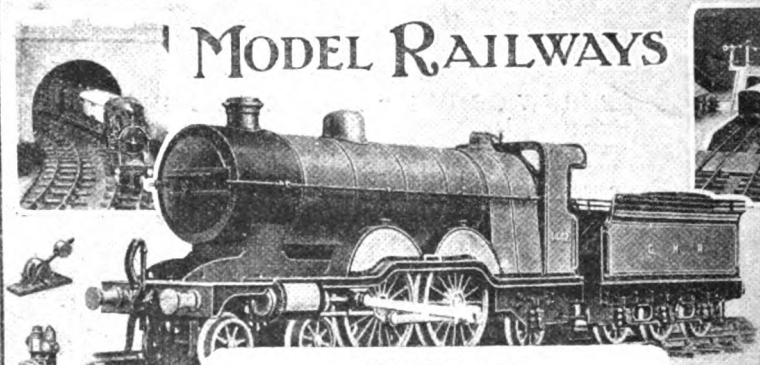

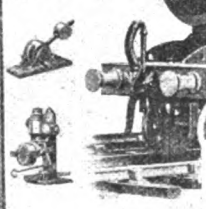

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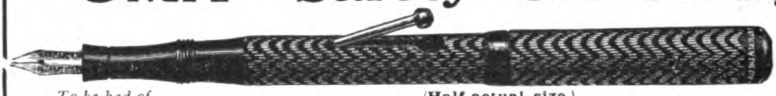

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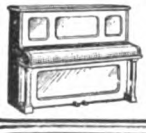

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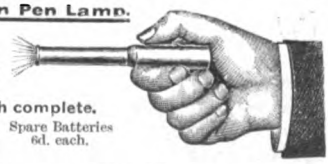

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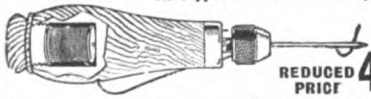

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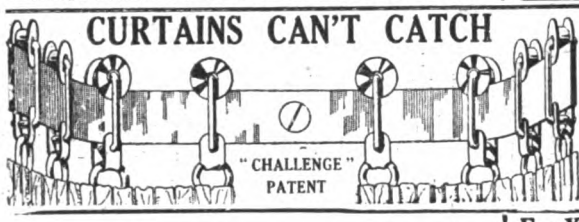

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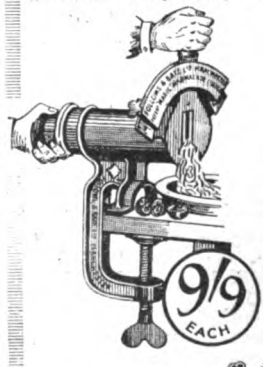

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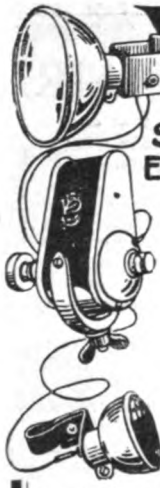

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STRAND MAG., *Dec.*, 1922.

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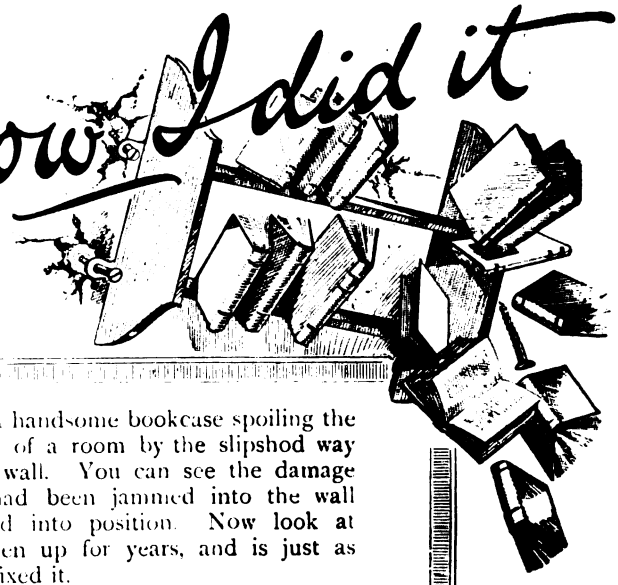
Strand Magazine, December 1922

How I did it

The Old Method



ONE often sees quite a handsome bookcase spoiling the whole artistic effect of a room by the slipshod way it has been fixed to the wall. You can see the damage where large woodplugs had been jammed into the wall and wedged or cemented into position. Now look at my bookcase. It has been up for years, and is just as neat and rigid as when I fixed it.

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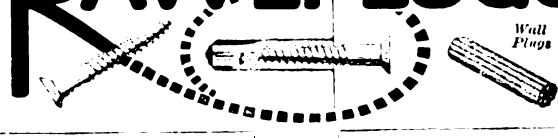

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The Strand Magazine.

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☞ THE STRAND MAGAZINE is printed by the Newnes and Pearson Printing Co., Ltd., N. Kensington, and published monthly by the Proprietors, George Newnes, Ltd., 8 to 11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, England. Subscription price to any part of the world, post free, for one year, 15s. (Canada, 14s.). Registered at the General Post Office for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Entered as Second-class Matter at the New York, N.Y., Post Office. Cases for binding volumes of THE STRAND MAGAZINE may be obtained to order from Booksellers for 2s. 6d., or post free for 2s. 10d. direct from the Office. Half-yearly Volumes, 7s. 6d. net.

Sole Agents for Australasia: Gordon & Gotch (Australasia), Ltd. Sole Agents for South Africa: Central News Agency, Ltd. American Agents: The International News Company, 83 and 85, Duane Street, New York.

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Illustration 2. Attractively neat Ladies' Glace Kid Derby Shoe. Patent toe-cap. "Dri-ped" soles. 19/9 per pair

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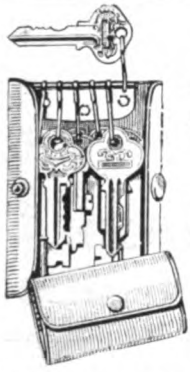

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E.P.7.

The Strand Magazine
DECEMBER, 1922

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the most popular romance of the South Seas ever written, a book of which millions of copies have been sold, and which in its dramatic form was one of the outstanding stage successes of recent years.

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THIS FASCINATING STORY

"THE GARDEN OF GOD"

AND ITS PUBLICATION IN
"THE STRAND MAGAZINE"
WILL BE

A Literary Event of 1923

"HE'S GOT HER! ON HIS SHOULDER! CHEER! HE'S COMING DOWN! CHEER! CHEER, GIRLS, CHEER AGAIN!"

(*See page 502.*)

The Rough Little Girl and the Smooth Little Girl

by

A. S. M. HUTCHINSON

Author of "If Winter Comes," "This Freedom," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY
FRANK CHELLERI

I.

ANYTHING rougher for her years (twelve) than the rough little girl has probably never been known. "Oh, darling," her mother used to sigh and say to her, "Oh, darling, you *are* rough"; to which the rough little girl used responsively to sigh and, "Oh, Cherishable," used to reply (she always called her mother Cherishable, being much devoted to her), "Oh, Cherishable, I *know* I am"; and used to sigh again, being ever so distressed at distressing her most dear mother, but also knowing herself to be hopelessly the slave of the quick, impetuous, imperious spirit that was hers. She *was* rough.

And anything gentler, that is to say smoother, for *her* years (eleven) than the smooth little girl it equally is impossible to believe. "Swipes, Lily," her father used to say to her (swipes being a coarse expression he often used, and Lily the name of the little girl who was smooth), "Swipes, Lily, one'd think you were a pauper's child the way you creep about. You aren't half quiet, Lily." To which, "Oh, father," the smooth little girl would reply, "Oh, father, it *is* hard to be noisy when you're not." She *was* smooth.

So there they were, the two of them, rough and smooth; and the very odd, strange circumstance about them is that each occupied the position in life which, if half we are told were true, should have been occupied by the other. A rough little girl may be expected to have rough parents, a vulgar home, and rude antecedents; a smooth little girl almost certainly will have gentle parents, elevating surroundings, and antecedents cultured and refined. The contrary is here the case. The rough little girl had every social and domestic advantage, the smooth little girl had none. The origins of the family of the rough little girl were rooted back beyond 1066, when the first Chilperine (her name) came over with William the Conqueror and fought beside him at the Battle of Hastings; the origins of the smooth little girl were darkly and impenetrably obscure prior to forty years ago, when the first Pook (her name) was employed in washing the dishes in a hot-sausage shop in the Mile End Road.

This must be presented in greater detail.

Anything more swagger, blue-blooded, aristocratic, and altogether superior and splendid than the family of the rough little girl it is impossible in all the Peerage of the United Kingdom to discover. True, there was no peerage, nor title of any sort, in the family of Chilperine; that there was not was part of their pride. Over and over again, as generation succeeded generation, they could have been ennobled; but over and over again, as Chilperine on Chilperine added lustre to his line, they refused to be ennobled. "I am a Chilperine," they used to say; and when they said that (or thought it), there was no more to be said. It was their motto. "*Sui Il Chiefs Pelrins.*" Which is, being interpreted out of the old Norman-French in which it was said after Hastings by the first Chilperine to his sovereign, "I am the Knight Pilgrim." Time has corrupted *Chiefs Pelrins* into Chilperine, and usage has turned the family saying into "I am a Chilperine"; but "I am the Pilgrim Knight" was the

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translation always kept to by the rough little girl, and the whole legend shows you, anyway, how splendid and superior the Chilperines were.

A visit to Chilperine Castle would show you more. Chilperine, for its treasury of art, as Chilperine itself as monument of beauty and romance, is the show place of show places of England. Of every aspect books might be (and have been) written. Let us here, and have done with it, make a note on but one—that Great Gallery of Chilperine wherein are ranged the Chilperine portraits. There in the Great Gallery they stand, those mighty Chilperines, and there among them often had stood the rough little girl, regarding them (rough as she was and little as she was) with that same pride, at once lofty and tolerant, at once conscious and unassuming, that is, as they say, "the Chilperine look." She *was* swagger.

NOW turn to the smooth little girl.

A sharper turn cannot possibly be imagined. *Her* father was called —Pook! *His* origin was—a hot-sausage shop! *His* motto was—Pork! It really is too vulgar. One cannot, after the air of Chilperine Castle abide it. We must skip the years (as Mr. Pook porked through them) and come to him at the time he entered the story here presented. He was still porcine. He was still vulgar. But he was at least clean and he was rich—oh, rich, rich, rich! Rolling in riches! He was a millionaire. They said he was a multi-millionaire.

How could he be so rich? How could a man who started in life washing dishes in a hot-sausage shop become a——

The answer hit in the eye wherever each questioner chanced to turn his eye. Was the questioner travelling in the train? Let him glance from the window. What did he see? He saw at every mile, he saw on every hill-top, marring the countryside, in letters twelve feet high:—

POOK'S PORKY PUFFS.

Was he walking the business streets of any of our cities? Let him but lift his eyes. What sign was that above that marble-fronted restaurant?

POOK'S PORK PALACE.

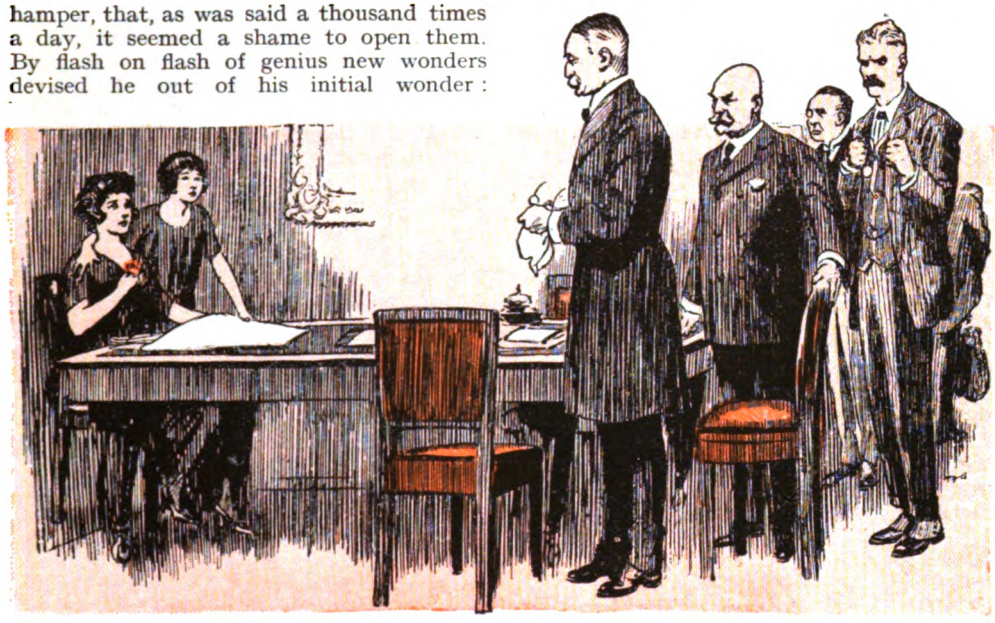
The rise of Mr. Pook from hot-sausages to six-cylindered motor-cars, from poverty to enormous wealth, is explained.

Genius did it. Contrast the term Porky Puff with the term Pork Pie; the dainty suggestiveness of the one with the sinister deadliness (to many) of the other. That was genius. Compare—but you could not compare—the flavour of the two. That was genius. The flavour of a porky puff was not pork—it was porky. Pork may have been the basis of it; the flavour that came to the palate was a delicious something reminiscent of cold turkey, of cold pheasant, of cold venison; and, when the porky puff was served piping hot, of turkey, of pheasant, and of venison tender as a piece of butter and cooked to a turn.

By genius Mr. Pook produced for this exquisite morsel a casket (the puff), flaky, creamy, melty, as the normal covering of a pork pie is iron-clad, stubborn, and unyielding. By genius he sold it, singly, in pairs, threes, half-dozens or dozens, in cartons so dainty to the eye, so handy for the pocket or the

"The Chilperine look."

hamper, that, as was said a thousand times a day, it seemed a shame to open them. By flash on flash of genius new wonders devised he out of his initial wonder:



The trustees of the estate told Mrs. Chilperine that ownership no longer could be maintained.

Princess Porky Puffs for the luncheon tables of the *élite;* Party Porky Puffs for the light-refreshment tables of social gatherings of every degree; Picnic Porky Puffs for the tourist and traveller; finally Pioneer Porky Puffs, packed in air-tight tins and bearing his written guarantee to keep sweet and fresh for ever, to go forth to give new life and sustenance to those facing hardship and privation in the wild places of the earth.

I am writing for gentle readers, and I therefore have pleasure in adding that, as might be expected, and as has already been hinted, Mr. Pook, self-made millionaire, was vulgar and blatant; and that his ostentatious wealth and his horrible advertising monstrosities caused his name (but not his porky puffs) to be held in reprobation by all nice people. Mr. Pook felt this. Constantly sneered at in smart papers, he felt very severely these attacks on his personality, and the persistent and not veiled cold-shouldering with which were greeted his efforts to get into society. A widower, he had but one child, the smooth little girl, upon whom he most passionately doted; for whom with a really pathetic intensity he longed for social place and recognition, and largely on whose account he did the terrific thing that causes this story to be written.

THE Chilperines, impoverished by death duties and by taxation, were forced to sell Chilperine—and Mr. Pook bought it!

Within the space of four years there fell in the Great War the father of the rough little girl and his only son and heir. There were left but the mother of the rough little girl and the rough little girl herself, and the day came when the trustees of the estate, assembled in the castle, told Mrs. Chilperine that ownership no longer could be maintained.

When I tell you that the mother of the rough little girl, when the trustees looked at her across the table for her assent, could not speak, but just drooped back in her chair and drew from her bosom the Chilperine rose she wore there and suffered it to fall to the floor; and when I tell you that the rough little girl, rough as she was, cried out in a very strange voice: "Leave Chilperine! Oh, Cherishable, we can't, we can't!" you will realize what was this disaster to those called upon to bear it. When I tell you of the shocked amaze with which, in leading articles, the news of the impending sale of Chilperine was commented upon by the Press; of the letters to the editor ("whose every stone, sir, is page of England's story"); of the campaign (nugatory) to cause Chilperine to be purchased for the nation ("this final crime in the record of the Government's crushing policy of waste and spoliation"), you will realize the howl that went up to high heaven when it was made known that the purchaser of Chilperine, the new occupant of the castle, the new owner of its treasures, was—Pook!

You can imagine, at the howl, the feelings of Mr. Pook; you can imagine, at their departure, the feelings of the rough little girl and her mother. Dry-eyed, as Chilperines must, but with their hands terribly each in each, mother and daughter had received the news of the death of the father of the rough little girl. "May I cry," said the rough little girl with a shake in her voice, "upstairs?" And when her mother, with her teeth on her lip and a speck of blood there, nodded, away like a flash sped the rough little girl and like a flash up halls and corridors and stairs (four good minutes, so vast the castle is, it took her), but never burst in all that time, but terribly did when soon her mother came to her and found her face down on her bed. "My Daddy! My Daddy!" sobbed the rough little girl. "My darling, he was a Chilperine," her mother said; "and he would have us remember, oh, Brenda, Brenda, that you and I——" But "My Daddy! My Daddy!" was all the rough little girl could bring to that.

DRY-EYED, but with their handclasp terrible indeed, so that the weals were on the fingers of the rough little girl an hour after, they had stood as they came out of church one Sunday and looked from face to face of all the whispering, glancing knots that stood about the door. "What is it, Jason?" the mother of the rough little girl had said to one. "Lady," said old Jason, "God comfort 'ee, 'tis Master Hugo gone." Very straight stood the mother of the rough little girl and looked upon the faces that sadly looked at her. "He was a Chilperine," she said. Very heavey was the rough little girl seen by the beholders to be, heavey in the chest and heavey at the throat as though something swelled and pressed for exit within her, but very straight with her mother she walked down between the heads all bared or bowed, and all she ever said to be heard was said to Martin the footman, who had not got open the door of the car when they arrived at the gate.

"Quick! Quick!" said the rough little girl.

So, because they were Chilperines, on neither of those two terrible occasions was either of them seen by anyone to cry; but when came that terrific day on which hand in hand they came down the steps for the last time, then were seen tears in Chilperine eyes, and by some (it is told to this day in the Chilperine Arms) was seen other emotion and another emblem of emotion such as never before in all the long generations of the Chilperines mortal eye had beheld.

This emblem of emotion was the long, bright red tongue of the rough little girl.

By misfortune, or by characteristic gaucherie of the manufacturer of Porky Puffs, the car of Mr. Pook, arriving, passed at the lodge gates the car of the Chilperines departing. Gloom was in the Porky Puff car. Mr. Pook, driving through the village, had seen in the scowls and in the deliberately turned backs of the villagers the manner of social relations that were likely to be his, and his soul was bitter within him. Tears were in the Chilperine car. The rough little girl had been since daybreak through the agonies of farewell and through the agonies yet more sharp of imagining the vile Pook amongst her treasures and her darling playthings of stable and of garden, and her heart was broken and savage within her. The cars met. They had to slow to pass. The rough little girl saw the smooth little girl and the coarse and abominable father of the smooth little girl. She levelled a baleful eye upon the father of the smooth little girl. She pulled at him a face truly diabolical in its contempt and malignity, and out of this face she projected at him as far as it would go what appeared to be quite seven inches of bright red tongue.

She *was* rough.

Quickness of decision and ruthlessness of nice feeling had very largely contributed to make Mr. Pook the financial Colossus that he had become. They helped him now. Entirely unprepared for this horrible outrage that suddenly confronted him, he nevertheless, and despite he was fifty-eight years of age, immediately countered it. At the bright red Chilperine tongue he thrust out, as far as he could thrust it, a dull, bluish Pook tongue.

Thus, tongues at full extension, met for the first time, and passed, Chilperine and Pook.

Aghast at conduct in her daughter so unspeakably gross (rough though she knew her to be) the mother of the rough little girl at last found words. "*Darling!* In all my life I never could have imagined——"

"Cherishable, I *had* to," said the rough little girl.

"Your roughness, darling——"

"Cherishable, I simply *had* to."

"Rougher and rougher you seem to get. Darling, it really pains me."

"He did it, too."

"You are a Chilperine."

"But I did it first."

"More utter, utter shame to you."

"All the same I'm glad I was first," said the rough little girl, and added, "Toads!"

Her mother sighed.

The rough little girl at that, as was her habit, snuggled against her mother and said: "Oh, Cherishable, I *know* I am rough. Still——" and beneath her breath muttered again: "Toads."

THE story now leaps on about two months and finds the rough little girl back at the school whereat she was a boarder and wherein she was the roughest little girl that so swagger and exclusive a school had ever known. Her intolerant and her impetuous spirit caused her to be a bully and a hectorer of all of her own years, and by all except her chosen intimates she was indeed much disliked. She had a sharp tongue and a rough hand and they were afraid of her. Nevertheless (or should it be therefore?) she occupied a very prominent position in the school; on the splendid occasions when parents visited the school for celebrative functions there was no companion one and all were more eager to introduce to their parents, and, because she was who she was, no child whom the mothers were more interested to meet, than "the little Chilperine girl."

She projected at him what appeared to be quite seven inches of bright red tongue.

Well, the story, rushing on, finds the little Chilperine girl engaged, not in hectoring her companions nor in meeting their mothers, but in writing, in highest heat, to her own mother.

"Cherishable, what DO *you think? The most extrordinry and atrochus thing has happened. At half term, which is the day after to-morrow, who ever do you think is coming to this school? The Pook girl!!! The little girl of that lothsome Pook creature who turned us out of darling, beloved Chilperine!!! Oh, Cherishable, can you imagine it? That frightful sick-faced child we saw in that ghastly yellow car that day when I put out my tongue at her, not content with lording it over every inch of my angel Chilperine, is coming to pursue me here in my very school, the retch and tode!! Well, Cherishable, you can depend upon me to have my revenge on her and make her life a burden to her. I've told all the girls who she is, and of course they all know, as everybody knows, what that horrible Pook, her father, has done to us. You know, don't you, that not one of the families around dear Chilperine will have anything to do with him, and I daresay he's sent his sick-faced child to school to get her out of what he must be feeling. Well, he'll jolly soon find out what he's done for her. I'll make her life a burden to her as sure as her name's the hideous and repulsive name it is—Pook. The day after to-morrow! I only wish it was to-morrow. We're all ready for her—especially* ME!"

That was the letter the rough little girl wrote, and this was the reply the rough little girl received. It was a telegram. It went flying back to her the very minute her mother read her letter, and for a woman who had set herself to practise rigid economy it must have been one of the most extravagant telegrams ever written. Mrs. Chilperine, in order that her daughter should make no mistake about it, even paid to have it punctuated.

"Oh, darling, what ever can you be thinking of to speak of taking your revenge? You are a Chilperine. No Chilperine ever takes revenge. Just think of that poor, frightened little mite coming amongst all you girls and you planning to make her poor little life a burden to her! Darling, you are a Chilperine, and you must make her life a joy to her, poor little thing. Now listen, darling. You are to be her friend and protector and to cherish her in every way. I am wiring Miss Philpotts to let the poor thing share your room, which I am sure can be arranged as Nora Blossom has had to go home and you have your room alone. So do this, darling, because you are a Chilperine and Chilperines must; and never, never have thoughts like that again. Heaps of kisses, darling."

II.

"YOU are Lily Pook," said the rough little girl to the smooth little girl. "I am Brenda Chilperine and I am going to be kind to you and cherish you. Don't speak. This is my room and you are going to share it, and we shall call it our room and you can use everything in it that is mine except my dagger paper-knife with the gold handle because it is the last thing I took out of Chilperine. Oh, well, I suppose you must. Yes, you can use that, too. Don't speak. If any girl here ever teases you, or if you are ever unhappy, you are to tell me at once and I will make it all right for you because I am going to make your life a joy to you. Don't speak. You may call me Brenda and you may show me all your letters and I will show you all mine. There's just one thing I am not going to do and will not do. I will not and shall not call you Lily. There's a barrier between us because you have turned me out of my beloved Chilperine and gone to live there yourself. No living soul in this school will know or suspect that there is a barrier between us because I am going to cherish you till I'm black in the face. But you and I know it, and what I'm going to call you is a private sign between us and a memorial unto us that there *is* a barrier. I'm not going to call you Lily; I'm going to call you Pook. Every time you hear me call you Pook, even if it's in the middle of doing an utmost kindness to you, you will remember the barrier. Don't speak. Every girl here will call you Pook because they will hear me calling you Pook. They won't know that it's a memorial between us, but we shall know, and whenever a girl calls you Pook our eyes will meet and we shall know our private barrier.

"I say," continued the rough little girl in a new voice, "that will be rather fun, won't it, to have our eyes meet like that, just like they do in books? Sometimes I shall be perhaps right at the end of a long room, and yet right across the room our eyes will meet and our souls commune. Eh?"

"How will you hear?" said the smooth little girl, doubtfully.

"Stupid!" cried the rough little girl. "If I don't hear it can't be done, can it? If you're going to ask nonsensical questions like that it's going to be harder than ever for me to cherish you. All the same" (and her voice changed again), "it might sometimes be hard to hear and other sometimes one of us might forget. What will have to be done is for the other one then to snap her fingers very loudly like that," and snap with her finger and thumb went the rough little girl with a crack like a whip. (She had bony fingers through much hockey, lawn-tennis, and cricket.) "Snap yours."

The snap made by the smooth little girl was not at all approved by the rough little girl (it could, indeed, only be written by the ridiculous sound "pluff"). "Your finger and thumb," said the rough little girl, "are simply podge," and was told apologetically, "They're very hot and slippery," and replied, "Wipe them, then, you stupid little thing! I must say a more frightened-looking child I've never seen. Are you always frightened like this?"

"I'm rather strange here, please," said the smooth little girl.

"Don't say 'please' like that," said the rough little girl. "Now come with me and I'll show you the other girls in my form and we'll do this secret sign business. Wipe your finger and thumb on your handkerchief."

"Snap yours."

AT this hour the girls of the rough little girl's form were in their rooms (every girl at this most swagger and exclusive school sharing with another the sweetest little study-bedroom you ever saw), and at the first study was performed the performance repeated in all the other studies. "Hilda and Mary," said the rough little girl, entering the first, "this is my new and great friend. I told you I was going to make her life a burden to her, but I also told you afterwards I was

not, but that I was going to cherish her. If you're not kindness itself to her you'd better look out for yourself, that's all. Her name is Pook. Lily's her ordinary name, but Pook is what she's got to be called. Take her over to the far end and call her Pook."

Hilda and Mary, much obedient to the rough little girl, as were all the girls of her age, took the smooth little girl aside as bade, and looked at her silently and with embarrassment.

"Go on!" cried the rough little girl. "Pook her, can't you!"

"Pook," said Mary.

"Idiot!" cried the rough little girl. "Say something to her, can't you?"

"How do you do, Pook?" said Hilda.

"Quite well, thank you," said the smooth little girl.

"My back is turned! My back is turned!" cried the rough little girl. "I can't hear what's going on. Signal, can't you?"

Pluff went the hot and damp fingers of the smooth little girl.

"*Tchk!*" very vexedly and impatiently went the tongue of the rough little girl. "Louder!"

Pluff.

"Much louder. Twice."

Pluff, pluff.

Very slowly and dramatically the rough little girl turned, folded her arms, and bending her head forward above them directed upon the smooth little girl a gaze of truly terrifying intensity.

Recovering, "That's a sign of the deadly secret between us," she explained to the astonished Mary and Hilda. "Come now, Pook, and do for goodness' sake wipe those horrible fingers of yours."

"You may think that I'm enjoying these. As a matter of fact, so much as to touch a porky puff is to me to eat of the bread of affliction."

THAT night when they were got to bed in the two little beds that stood side by side, "There's one question I should like to ask you," said the rough little girl. "Have you ever seen me before to-day?"

"Yes, I have," said the smooth little girl. "Why did you put your tongue out at me?"

"Because my tongue's my own and I can slide it in and out without asking *you*," said the rough little girl. "Your father put out his tongue at me, which was far worse, and I may as well tell you at once that a more hideous tongue I never saw. I suppose he lives on porky puffs. What I was going to say is, Have I made your life a joy to you to-day?"

"You have been very, very kind to me," most earnestly replied the smooth little girl. "I was dreading coming here, but you have been kindness itself to me, Brenda."

"That's what I've *got* to be," returned the rough little girl, "because I am a Chilperine, and if it made you unhappy my sticking my tongue out at you, I hereby withdraw my tongue. Talking about porky puffs, have you by any chance brought any with you?"

"I've got one packet of six in my box."

"Princess porky puffs or Party porky puffs?"

"Party, Brenda."

"Well, it was very wrong of you," said the rough little girl, very sternly. "It's utterly forbidden to bring grub to school, and if you're found out to-morrow you will be in disgrace. I've got to shield you in every way, and it seems to me that the only way to shield you in this is for us to eat them now before they're discovered. Get them, Pook."

The smooth little girl got them.

"Three for you and three for me,"

said the rough little girl, dividing the packet. "You may think," she added, as they sat up in bed munching, "that I'm enjoying these. As a matter of fact, so much as to touch a porky puff is to me to eat of the bread of affliction." She munched the bread of affliction with capable jaws. "All the same, I frankly admit they're very good. If you don't want that last one of yours I'll have it for you. Now go to sleep and don't speak another word. This has been a very trying day for me, and I can perfectly well see you are going to try me very much; even apart from the fact that I have a mortal grudge against you, which I have to quell because I am a Chilperine, I think you are, in many ways, the most stupid child I have ever met. Good night, Pook."

Thus was begun for the smooth little girl a tutelage at once stern and affectionate, harsh and devoted. Brenda unquestionably bullied Lily, but as unquestionably bullied her always for her own good. She never spoke to her a word that anyone overhearing possibly could call a kind word; but all her sharp and apparently unfeeling admonitions were towards helping Lily to hold her own, and it was woe betide any girl other than Brenda's self who dared to make unhappy the daughter of Mr. Pook. The rough little girl cherished the smooth little girl, and the day came when Mr. Pook thanked her and was himself cherished.

III.

"IF you can't hold your own, I must *make* you hold your own," was the rough little girl's most constant cry; and there came a day when it was extended to include the father of the smooth little girl also. "If your father," said the rough little girl in her impatient way, "is coming down to Speech Day, he's coming down to Speech Day. And if I say he never will hold his own here, he never will hold his own here. Have you ever known me wrong in anything I've told you?"

"Never," said the smooth little girl.

"Very well, then. My mother can't come, and even if she could come I should have to be lugging you about all day, for a more shy or stupid child I have never seen or imagined. I've got to cherish you, and I suppose that means I've got to cherish your frightful father as well."

"Brenda," said the smooth little girl, timidly, "he's not frightful."

"He's got a frightful tongue," said Brenda, "because I've seen it, as you perfectly well know."

The smooth little girl rather painfully coloured. "He was very upset that day because the people in the village had been rude to him. Everyone at Chilperine still is very rude to him, and he says he knows all the parents here at Speech Day will be rude to him."

"Not if I cherish him," said Brenda, "unless, of course, he puts out his tongue at them."

"He won't. My darling father wouldn't really be unkind to a soul. He says he will be equal with all these people one day. He says he'll be a lord before he's finished, Brenda."

The rough little girl gave a snort down her rough little nose. "Perhaps he says he'll be the man in the moon some day!"

"I've never heard him say so," said the smooth little girl.

"You know, the simple fact about you," said Brenda, "is that you're a born idiot."

"Yes, Brenda," said the smooth little girl.

"And how you're going to cherish yourself in those boots, I can't see or imagine"

Nevertheless, it was not treatment such as is normally awarded to a born idiot that the smooth little girl had in her daily letters reported to her father. On the contrary, it was treatment that seemed to have filled her with an ecstatic devotion.

"You've been uncommon good to my little lass," said Mr. Pook, on his arrival, "and I'm uncommon grateful to you; especially," added Mr. Pook, with a shade of embarrassment, "seeing as what passed between us the first time we met."

"Tongues," said the rough little girl.

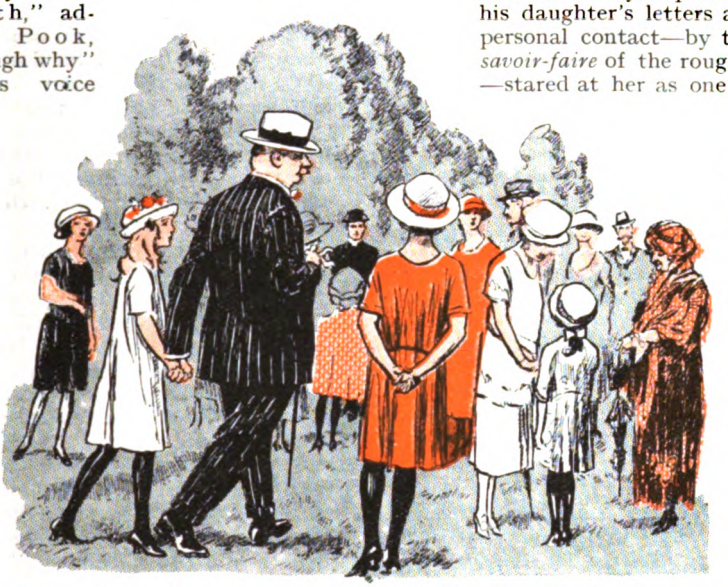
"Something like that," said Mr. Pook.

"All it is," said the rough little girl, "is that I've had to cherish Pook because I am a

Chilperine, and to-day I have got to cherish you because I am a Chilperine. I dare say you are feeling rather nervous, aren't you?"

"To tell you the honest truth," admitted Mr. Pook, "I am; though why"—and his voice became slightly defiant—"I should be, I don't know."

The rough little girl looked him up and down appraisingly. "I should say it's those frightful boots you've got on," she reported.



There followed an afternoon in which Mr. Pook trod painfully in the wake of the rough little girl.

Mr. Pook had arrived in a terrific car. He had been met by the little girls, smooth and rough, at a point where a path across the grounds of the swagger and exclusive school met the main road, and he had disclosed himself on alighting from the car wearing a striped blue suit that struck one as neat, but white buckskin boots that struck one as gaudy.

"What's the matter with the boots?" inquired Mr. Pook, staring down upon them.

"They're white," said the rough little girl.

"Fine and white, too," responded Mr. Pook. "Didn't you tell my little lass this was to be an outdoor garden-party affair, and to come dressed according?"

"I didn't tell her it was to be a yachting affair," said the rough little girl. "Those boots, with that suit, would be all right on a yacht. At this Speech Day to-day they'll simply make you a figure of shame."

Mr. Pook sat down on the step of the car and regarded his cherisher gloomily. "Well, that's a good start, isn't it?" said Mr. Pook.

"It's a horrible start," corrected the rough little girl. "If I've got to cherish you to-day, you've got to——" She frowned for a word.

"Cherish myself," suggested Mr. Pook.

"Exactly," said the rough little girl; "and how you're going to cherish yourself in those boots, I can't see or imagine."

She said this so gravely and so determinedly that Mr. Pook, already nervous of his reception at this swagger and exclusive school, already impressed both by his daughter's letters and by this personal contact—by the obvious *savoir-faire* of the rough little girl—stared at her as one arrived at a crisis in life's problems. "Can't walk about in my socks all day, can I?" he debated.

"You *can't*," said the rough little girl.

Despair was blown in an enormous gust from between the distended cheeks of Mr. Pook. "Seems to me I'd best go back," said he.

"Certainly *not*," said the rough little girl. "If I've got to cherish you, cherished you've got to be; never mind what happens. Just keep perfectly quiet, if you don't mind, while I think."

She stood with brows corrugated as beneath stupendous tension of thought, and she was watched, as she stood, with awe and with a great hush by Mr. Pook, by Lily Pook, and by the chauffeur of Mr. Pook.

"There's your chauffeur's boots," said the rough little girl.

The chauffeur, obsequious, brightened.

"They're worse," said the rough little girl.

The chauffeur, crushed, reddened.

"A bit yellow," said Mr. Pook, in the voice of one who felt he must say something, "a bit yellow for this suit."

"Too yellow," said the rough little girl. She darted a sudden questioning arm towards Mr. Pook. "Just tell me this: would you consider it an extravagance to buy a new pair of boots?"

"It would need a bigger thing than a pair of boots for me to call extravagant," said Mr. Pook, and he spoke the words with a smile slightly grim.

"Well, you'll want a pretty big pair,"

said the rough little girl. "If you ask me, your feet are simply enormous."

The smile left the face of Mr. Pook. He said, soberly: "I can afford it."

"Then that's what we'll do," said the rough little girl, brightly. "There's a shop in the town, and we'll do it at once."

They drove to the town, and they entered the shop. "Can you afford patent leather?" said the rough little girl.

"I think I can," said Mr. Pook.

"Then you can have patent leather," said the rough little girl.

"Thank you," said Mr. Pook.

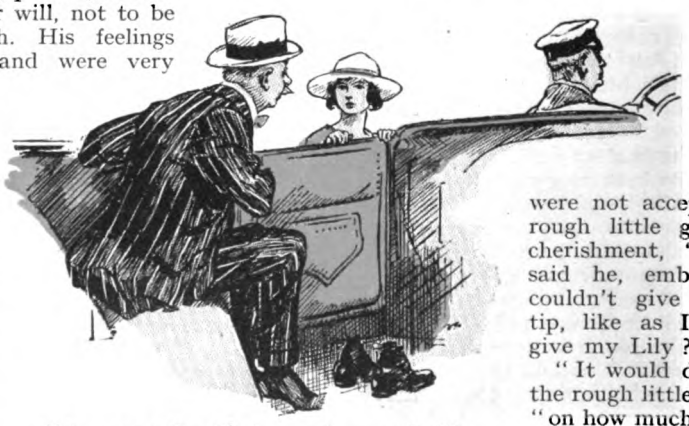
"This gentleman," said the rough little girl to the shop assistant, "would like a pair of patent-leather boots, not too dear, and not too pointed."

The assistant stripped off the impossible white boot from one foot of Mr. Pook, and measured the foot.

"And see," said the rough little girl, "that you give him a nice, roomy fit, because he's got to wear them to walk all day in."

"Certainly, miss," said the assistant.

A pair of boots approved by the rough little girl were placed upon the feet of Mr. Pook, and there followed an afternoon in which Mr. Pook trod painfully, but with feelings very novel to him, and very agreeable to him, in the wake of the rough little girl. He trod painfully because the boots, though roomy, proved, as new patent leather will, not to be roomy enough. His feelings were novel, and were very agreeable, because for the first time in his life he found himself received, nay, made to feel at home, by a class of society which hitherto he had at once envied and loathed.



"I suppose," said he, embarrassed, "I couldn't give you a little tip?"

The rough little girl, as firmly cherishing Mr. Pook among the swagger and exclusive parents as she had cherished Lily Pook among the swagger and exclusive girls, took the great Colossus of porky puffs from group to group scattered about the garden, introduced him, set him down in the heart of each group, immersed him and piloted him in that group's conversation, and at the proper interval of time collected him from that group and conducted him to similar amenities in another group.

"This is Mr. Pook," was the rough little girl's formula. "He is the father of my greatest friend, Lily Pook. This is Lily Pook. And he lives at Chilperine Castle, where we used to live. Sit down, Mr. Pook." And there were joined to this formula high-sounding names and highly-distinguished titles belonging to the other parties to the introduction that caused Mr. Pook to sit down with the sense of sitting in the seats of the mighty, and with the gratification thereof. As to the owners of these names and these titles, whether it was that they were tickled, or whether it was that they were touched, by the cherishment of Mr. Pook by the rough little girl, unquestionably they showed to Mr. Pook that hearts just as pure and fair may beat in Belgrave Square as in the lowly air of porky puff palaces. They welcomed Mr. Pook and, what is more, getting into conversation with him, they enjoyed Mr. Pook and liked Mr. Pook. "Have you met," they said to one another, "that Mr. Pook with that too-comic Brenda Chilperine? He's delicious. He really is delightful."

IT was a thrilled Mr. Pook, but it was also a profoundly touched Mr. Pook, that as evening fell sat in the terrific car in process of taking leave of the rough little girl. Having thanked her, not effusively, for some instinct told him effusive thanks, like white boots, were not acceptable to the rough little girl's idea of cherishment, "I suppose," said he, embarrassed, "I couldn't give you a little tip, like as I'm going to give my Lily?"

"It would depend," said the rough little girl, frankly, "on how much it was."

Mr. Pook was taken aback. "Would five pounds," said he, nervously, "be all right?"

"Five pounds," said the rough little girl, in her impatient way, "would be perfectly ridiculous. If you like to give me five shillings I think it would be very kind of you, and I will write you a letter to thank you."

"There is no occasion," said Mr. Pook, "to do that." He handed her two half crowns. "There's only one way for me to say the amount of things I'd like to say, and

that is that you're a real little lady, a *real* one. What was it you said when we met you were going to do to me same as you said you had done to Lily ? "

"Cherish you," said the rough little girl.

"You have," said Mr. Pook, emphatically. "Do you mind telling me—it's been rather a job, hasn't it, rather a bit of work, all that cherishing this afternoon ? "

"At the beginning," replied the rough little girl, "it was rather a strain."

"I reckon," said Mr. Pook.

"You needn't mind," said the rough little girl. "I didn't do it because I *wanted* to do it. I did it because I *had* to do it. I've got to cherish Lily, and I supposed I had to cherish you, because I am a Chilperine."

Mr. Pook stared upon the roughlittle girl meditatively. "I dare say," said he, "it's not all jam being a Chilperine."

"I dare say," said the rough little girl, "it's not all porky puff being a Pook."

"You're right," said Mr Pook.

"Where is Lily Pook?" cried the mistress.

IV.

THE story now takes a turn, at once hackneyed and sentimental, which I detest, and something like which I have been dreading all the time. If only I could invent stories for myself instead of telling other people's I never would stoop to the smell of smoke and the clanging of a great bell to which the rough little girl one night awoke. Of course you guess at once what had happened and what is going to happen. The swagger and exclusive school was on fire. Brenda skipped out of bed, stuffed on her shoes, jerked up her wrapper, and simply rushed. She gave never a thought to Lily Pook. She never imagined this was a real fire. At least twice in every term that bell used to startle the swagger and exclusive girls out of their sleep and send them hustling to their established places in the great hall in the delicious excitement of fire drill. There were prizes for the girls who got there in three minutes from the alarm, and punishment (forfeits) for the girls who did not get there in five. Hence never a thought of Lily Pook, only the skipping out, the stuffing on, the jerking up, and the rushing down. True, a smell of smoke had never before been present with the alarm bell, but in the excitement to be down among the prize-winners Brenda scarcely noticed it.

She noticed it very dreadfully as in the mob of others she fled downstairs and into the hall. Also horrible crackling noises ; also strange heat ; also no stopping in the hall. Mistresses were there to shout "In the garden ! In the garden ! Take your places on the lawn ! " and they were all in their places, much agitated, hysterically squeaking as to some of them, hysterically exclaiming as to nearly all at the horrid sight of red and yellow light glowing angrily behind the window panes, before ever to Brenda came the thought of Lily. Indeed, it only came when simultaneously it came to all the rest of that frightened throng.

The first rule in the principles of the fire drill was the taking of a roll-call. A mistress well accustomed to the list, comporting herself with superb calm in this terrible crisis, rattled off the names. The swagger and exclusive girls, well accustomed to the order of their names, and comporting themselves now with automatic precision, rattled out responses. One name (its owner recently joined) was pencilled at the foot of the list. One girl, for the like reason, never yet had participated in a fire drill ; knew not the meaning of the great bell ; did not respond when at last her name was called.

"Lily Pook ! " cried the mistress, and stopped ; and there seemed to be in all that din a dreadful silence. "Lily Pook ! " she cried again · and there came a cold clutch to the

heart of Brenda; and now indeed was panic. "Where is Lily Pook?" cried the mistress. "Has anyone seen Lily Pook?" And using the smooth little girl's funny little name, "Pook! Pook!" cried all the swagger and exclusive missies. "Pook! Pook! Pook!"

I OUGHT to have said (but you have doubtless guessed it) that, as always happens in stories of this kind, the nearest fire-engine was miles and miles away. No men were attached to this swagger and exclusive school. Men, indeed, were firmly kept away from it. The very gardeners were lady gardeners; the lady principal's chauffeur was a lady chauffeur; and now, while men, for the first time in the history of that swagger and exclusive school, were very badly wanted, and while still that frightened throng wailed "Pook! Pook!" into the night, their wails suddenly were changed to screams of "Brenda! Brenda!" also of "Stop her! Stop her!"

Again you can guess. It always happens in stories of this kind. There came to the rough little girl the dreadful knowledge that here, in the absence of that Pook, her trust was betrayed. The Pook whom it was her duty, because she was a Chilperine, to cherish was not being cherished. She was, on the contrary, being burnt alive.

A Pilgrim Knight, that is to say a Chilperine, cannot stand by and see that happen.

As countless heroines have done before, but much more fearfully, because, although she was a Chilperine, she was not really a heroine, the rough little girl fled across the lawn and into the great hall and up the stairs and down the corridors and into the room jointly shared. She went by no means so swiftly as this is written. In some stages she went very slowly. Once, when half-way up the stairs, she went back. She was very frightened, and she had occasion to be very frightened. There was smoke and there were flames, and there was very great heat, and there was a most terrible rending and crackling.

"I am the Pilgrim Knight."

It is not the kind of thing that a little girl would say or think, horribly situated as was this little girl, but I have to state and to emphasize that she did say it. She went back once in the great hall, and she said, "I am the Pilgrim Knight!" and she went on again. She went back once on the first landing; and she said, "I am the Pilgrim Knight!" and she went on again. She went back once on the second flight of stairs, and she saw, not in the direction on which she had turned her back, but in the direction towards which now stood her face, that which most terribly dismayed her. In the brief instant since her passage of the flight below, flames had appeared where flames had not been. They were leaping up, and they leapt from the landing to the stairs with a horrible fluttering sound, like a flag drumming in a great wind.

That was what beneath her the rough little girl saw; and it was perfectly clear to her that if those stairs were to be descended and safety reached, they must be descended now, at once, with all possible speed, or never.

She nerved herself for that terrible rush to lovely safety; and at the pitch of her nerving, that is to say on her tiptoes, with her breath held up to bursting, with one hand stretched down the balustrade, with the other frantically caught to her small bosom, she remembered a thing that her people had been saying ever since the first Chilperine said it to William the Conqueror; and tears of fright rushed to her eyes and streamed out of her eyes, and she said it.

"I am the Pilgrim Knight," she said, and she turned and took those stairs again.

She kept repeating it now. She had to. "I am the Pilgrim Knight! I am the Pilgrim Knight! I am the Pilgrim Knight!" She said it over and over again, very fast and very fierce. She had to, she would have gone back else.

Well, that is the easiest bit of that part, and the rest has to be hurried over because it is rather painful.

THE rough little girl found the smooth little girl cowering beside the window of her room. The smooth little girl cried, "Oh, Brenda! Brenda!" The rough little girl, recovering at sight of the smooth little girl something of her normal attitude towards her, cried, "Oh, *Pook!* I must say you really are the most maddening and infuriating and senseless Pook! Whatever on earth did you stay up here for?"

She caught the smooth little girl by the hand and dragged her (she had to be dragged) to the head of the stairs.

But beyond the first flight there were no stairs; there were only flames.

"Now you see," cried the rough little girl, "what you have done! Pook, you ought to be *boiled*."

As the smooth little girl was in more than considerable danger of being within a very few minutes burnt, this was no very alarming threat; and there came almost immediately new terrors very terrible, which lost the rough little girl the confidence that came to her by resumption of her bullying and hectoring ways. There came up the well of the staircase a sudden giant flame that leapt like a spontaneous combustion of the air about them. They staggered back and Lily screamed.

"We are going to die! We are going to die!" she cried, and clutched both her arms around the other.

The rough little girl kissed her. "Darling Pook," she said, "we are not. Darling Pook, you have *only* got to be brave."

There was a short passage here, and the rough little girl took the smooth little girl to the window at the end of it. At the end of the long corridor on this landing was a fire-escape. At the end of this passage there was no fire-escape and the corridor could not be reached.

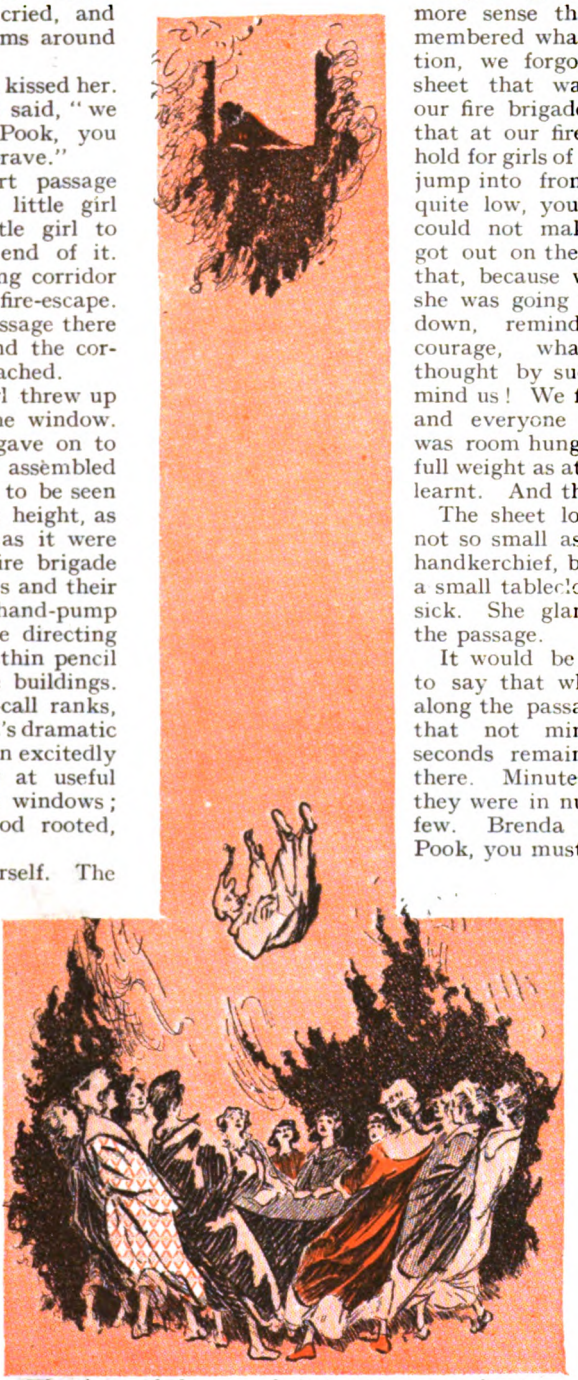
The rough little girl threw up the lower sash of the window. It very fortunately gave on to the lawn where had assembled the girls. They were to be seen now, from that great height, as midgets performing as it were antics. The school fire brigade had found their senses and their implements. With a hand-pump and a hose they were directing what looked to be a thin pencil of water against the buildings. Other girls—the roll-call ranks, understrain of Brenda's dramatic flight, abandoned—ran excitedly to and fro, stopping at useful points to search the windows; others in groups stood rooted, staring.

Brenda showed herself. The puppets, as though jerked by simultaneous movement of every string, whirled into agitation of tossing arms and running feet. They collected in a crowd. There came up thin wisps of voices piping "Brenda! Brenda!" The smooth little girl was seen. "Pook! Pook!" arose the piping notes.

It was told afterwards by a mistress: "We knew they were cut off from the fire-escape on their landing, for we had seen flames from the window where it was fastened. We were distracted. That brave child, in her dreadful peril, had more sense than we. She remembered what, in our distraction, we forgot, the jumping-sheet that was supplied with our fire brigade equipment and that at our fire drill we used to hold for girls of the gym. eight to jump into from the first floor; quite low, you know. Brenda could not make us hear. She got out on the window-sill, and that, because we were terrified she was going to throw herself down, reminded us. What courage, what coolness of thought by such means to remind us! We fled for the sheet, and everyone for whom there was room hung on it with their full weight as at our drill we had learnt. And then——"

The sheet looked to Brenda not so small as a large pocket-handkerchief, but not so big as a small tablecloth. Brenda felt sick. She glanced back along the passage.

It would be an exaggeration to say that what Brenda saw along the passage informed her that not minutes but only seconds remained for life up there. Minutes remained, but they were in number very, very few. Brenda said: "Darling Pook, you must jump."



The form of the smooth little girl came whizzing, and was caught upon the sheet.

Lily most dreadfully shrieked. "Brenda, I can't, I can't!"

The rough little girl said: "Darling Pook!" and began to lift her.

The smooth little girl screamed, "Brenda! Brenda!" and at her smooth little knees collapsed.

She had fainted.

The rough little girl tried to raise her and found, because she was very hurried and very terrified, that she could not raise her. She

leaned from the window, and those upon the lawn screamed to her, "Jump! Jump!"

She put a leg over the window-sill and again looked down and they screamed more loudly than before, "Jump! Jump!" She drew up the other leg and began, very quickly, to thrust it over, and she looked back and looked down at the smooth little girl, crumpled; and she did not say it herself, but it was said for her into her by the spirit that stretched back to the first Chilperine, and that frequently at moments like this found a voice for itself, much disturbing the living stuff. It was said for her into her: "You are a Chilperine."

So she caught at her breath and she drew back her legs and she was not seen by those who from the lawn screamed, "Jump, Brenda, jump!"

There immediately was seen by them instead the form of the smooth little girl, which first was on the window-ledge, and then between the arms of the rough little girl was suspended above the sheet, and then came whizzing, and miraculously was caught upon the sheet, and bounced, but not much, and was caught again, and was deposited, unhurt, upon the lawn.

You know, it's confusion when you are swagger and exclusive girls, and not trained firemen, holding a jumping-sheet, and a body comes thudding into it. You can't be ready again at once, you know.

There *was* confusion; and while that confusion, as they say, "reigned," there was a mighty crash, and a bursting up to heaven of sparks that flames, as if they chased them, clutched at with angry fingers; and that was part, not all, of the roof gone in; and there were shouts, and men, and rushings, and that was the fire brigade arrived and running a snake of ladders to the house; and there was every eye towards one point, and every heart in dread towards it, and that was where the little girl that was rough had been—and was not.

Up went that snake of ladders and up the first, pit-a-pat! my goodness how he goes! a giant fellow with a shining hat; and up the next, and *flick!* has pushed another up before him; and he's up that, and *flick!* he's up again. Pit-a-pat! my word, his feet and hands aren't feet and hands, they're four spots racing! Up, up; up, up; my life, that man's a sailor! He's up. His hands are at the window. Up goes his leg. He's gone. My stars he hadn't touched the top before he—*flick*—was vanished; before he—LOOK! Print it in shouts, before he—LOOK! HE'S GOT HER! ON HIS SHOULDER! CHEER! HE'S OUT! HE'S COMING DOWN! CHEER! CHEER, GIRLS, CHEER AGAIN! Here, let me out, I want to cry. Confound it!

(I say, that's the way to tell a story!)

From a New Year Honours List: To be Barons. Mr. Samuel Pook.

V.

THE rough little girl passed through a number of scenes and among a number of faces very decidedly bewildering to her. The first face upon which she squarely got her eye was, astoundingly, the large red face, gazing upon her from the foot of the bed, of Mr. Pook. The next face, standing beside her, was the face of Lily Pook; and the first scene, enframing these faces, clearly observed by the rough little girl was, amazingly, the very dear and familiar scene of her own bedroom at Chilperine Castle. She then, with effect much more stabilizing, perceived on the other side of her, smiling at her, the face of her mother.

In every story of this kind that I have ever read the first words of the rough little

girl would have been: "Is Pook safe?" A beatific smile would then have adorned her face. She then would have said she heard the sound of angels' music; and then, very beautifully, would have died. I hate to write that her first words were, instead, quite calmly: "Cherishable, is this my room at Chilperine?" She then said: "How lovely!" and she then incontinently went to sleep.

What had happened was that Mr. Pook, hearing by telephone of the disaster, had rushed over to the school in his terrific car; and hearing there of his daughter's peril and rescue, had first fallen on his knees and shed from his eyes tears, almost as big as his own porky puffs, of thanksgiving and of gratitude, and had then conveyed the rough little girl, together with his own smooth little girl, back to the castle, which, said he subsequently, and brokenly, to the mother of the rough little girl, "She's never going to leave, madam. I knew her weeks ago, madam, for the finest little lady that ever stepped; and she's showed herself the bravest little lady. 'I am a Chilperine,' she said to me that day I went there; and I reckon she is, and the best of 'em. And I reckon she belongs here, and I reckon Chilperine belongs to her; and say what you like, madam, it *is* hers."

This "say what you like" was because, earlier in the conversation, the mother of the rough little girl, seeing that Mr. Pook was really serious in his remarkable intention, had pointed out, very kindly (she also being much moved) but very firmly, that the most celebrated home in England cannot possibly be given to a small schoolgirl whose family has had to sell it because unable to afford the upkeep of it.

"That must, altogether apart from anything else, be plain to you, dear Mr. Pook," said the mother of the rough little girl.

"What's plain to me," said Mr. Pook, "is that my little lass is worth to me all the castles in England, and that that little lady upstairs is worth all the castles in England. There's an idea suddenly come to me, madam, and I'll go right to my study and do it now. I'll not tell you what it is, madam, till it's done. But I'll tell you what it's come to me out of. This castle isn't for my sort. I'm going to give it where it belongs; and your brave little lady, that belongs to it as much as the walls belong to it, I'm going to give her, too."

With this strange saying Mr. Pook went to his study, wrote upon a sheet of paper: "To the Right Honourable the Prime Minister—Sir——" and brought to an end this story.

SOME newspaper extracts can close it. First those headlines in perfectly enormous type which one day burst out of the Press:—

CHILPERINE FOR THE NATION.
MUNIFICENT GIFT
BY MR. SAMUEL POOK.

Then just a quotation from the enthusiastic leading articles accompanying them:—

"Particularly happy, we may say particularly beautiful, is the sole condition on which this princely benefactor of the nation makes his gift. 'Chilperine,' as he says, would not be Chilperine without a Chilperine . . . A sum of money has been set aside by Mr. Pook for purposes of this private upkeep . . . Miss Brenda Chilperine will for her lifetime own and dwell in the castle. Mrs. Chilperine, as her accompanying letter shows, has accepted, on behalf of her daughter, the trust."

More Press extracts. This one from a New Year Honours List:—

TO BE BARONS.
MR. SAMUEL POOK.
(Donor of Chilperine to the Nation.)

And then this one, not long after, which first has to be prefaced by words said by Mrs. Chilperine to Mr. Pook during one of the holidays, which always the smooth little girl and her father spent with the rough little girl and her mother. "Mr. Pook, I insist. Your name must go down with the Chilperine name. Look what you have done for it. Yes, that is to be your title, please."

This one:—

"Mr. Samuel Pook, on his elevation to the peerage, has assumed the title of Lord Pook of Chilperine."

The rough little girl showed it to the smooth little girl. "And mind you, Pook," said the rough little girl, speaking with some difficulty, for her mouth was full: "And mind you, Pook, it sounds jolly well, I think. 'Lord Pook of Chilperine.' I vote we have just one more porky puff, and that's all."

The Film that was Never Shown

by

H. C. McNEILE

("SAPPER")

ILLUSTRATED BY J. DEWAR MILLS

1.

THE Trade Show was just over. The leading man and the leading lady, having watched themselves for two hours on the screen, had appeared before the audience in the flesh. The producer had come on to the stage and bowed. And finally the man who had expended well over forty thousand pounds on the production came on and bowed also.

At each separate rise of the curtain renewed applause broke out from the audience. There was no doubt that "Loaded Dice," in spite of its somewhat melodramatic name, was something distinctly out of the ordinary. Hardly a dissentient voice was to be heard amongst the hundreds of critical spectators who had been invited to the Alhambra to see the first public exhibition. Actors, authors, film-stars, and—most critical of all—other producers agreed that "Loaded Dice" was an exceptionally fine film, brilliantly acted and lavishly staged.

Carlton Bellairs, the leading man and a London actor-manager of note, had fully sustained his great reputation in a strong emotional part; Sylvaine Lankester, the leading lady, had supported him with her usual consummate ability. And quite up to their standard had been John Drage, who was the third of the principals.

The action of the film had revolved round these three. Not for one moment had the interest flagged through the whole six reels. A few side issues had been introduced principally for the purpose of showing some wonderful photographs of Italian and Egyptian scenery; but only a few. The film required no padding. Right from the start it led steadily and inexorably to the final clash between the two men for the possession of the girl. One knew it was coming, and yet—so good was the story—one never wanted to get on quicker; to skip, as one might say in book parlance.

And when it finally came it held one breathless, principally because of the marvellous acting. To write it may render it banal; its very essential lay in the unspoken horror and tragedy of the scene. Carlton Bellairs, of course, was acting the part of the hero, Hubert Malden, and Sylvaine played the girl, Mary Maxwell. John Drage, the other principal, was in popular phraseology the villain, Edward Latford. And the final scene took place in Mary's villa at Florence. She was seated with Hubert Malden on a sofa in the drawing-room, thinking that at long last their troubles were over. Edward Latford had, as they thought, been finally disposed of, and she had just promised to marry Hubert.

And after a while he had risen and pressed the bell for the butler to bring tea. They were secure; they were in love; everything was wonderful. And in that mood they waited for the tea, while we who looked on, keyed up with excitement, waited too. At last the door opened; doubtless the butler bringing tea. The happy couple on the sofa moved decorously apart, and even as they did so a shadow was thrown on the wall—a shadow which they could not see but which we could. It was the shadow of an arm outstretched a little, and a revolver was in the hand. Slowly the shadow moved forward until the body appeared, and then finally the man himself. Still the pair on the sofa waited in blissful ignorance;

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but only we knew that it was not the butler, but Edward Latford. And on his face there blazed a look of fanatical hate.

Suddenly he swung round the door, and they saw him. For a moment they held the position, and we had time to see the superb acting of all three. Speechless horror by the girl; a momentary indecision by the hero before he flung himself at the villain; blazing fury by the villain. Then the villain fired, and the hero pitched forward on his face. The scene faded out, and then showed again to let us see that the villain had turned his revolver on his own head and committed suicide.

Such, in brief, was the climax up to which a very remarkable film led. I have no intention of telling any more of the story; when " Loaded Dice " is released in due course the public may see it for themselves. But it has been necessary to give this one scene, in order to make clear the extraordinary statement which was made to me that evening by a wild-eyed man in a little restaurant in Soho. I still cannot make up my mind as to whether his story was the truth or not, though some day, if I am in Italy with time to spare, I may test it. Certain it is that this man knew all that there was to be known of the inside of the film business; that he had either acted himself, or, at any rate, worked in some capacity in a studio admits of no doubt. I know sufficient of the game myself to feel assured of that. But whether he was what he said he was, or whether he was partially demented and had imagined it, I know not. Those who are interested can read on and judge for themselves.

THE audience was thinning out when I first saw him. Little knots of people stood about discussing the film, and in the centre of one group stood Sylvaine Lankester, receiving the congratulations she richly deserved.

" Magnificent, my dear," said one woman, and a general murmur of assent followed—a murmur which was broken by a harsh, discordant laugh, which made everyone swing round hurriedly. It was the man whom I had noticed as I left my stall, a man with blazing eyes. His clothes were somewhat shabby, and I had wondered casually when I first saw him how he had got in to the trade show. But now he stood on the edge of the group which surrounded Sylvaine Lankester, and stared at her mockingly.

" Magnificent ! " he sneered. " Why, you were rotten. Rotten, I tell you, Sylvaine Lankester. What did you want to register fear for—fear and horror—as Edward Latford came round the door? Blank, I know, blank ammunition was in the revolver. And the fool producer told you to show fear. But supposing it hadn't been blank, Sylvaine Lankester? Supposing that film had been the truth, what then? "

Instinctively the girl recoiled from him, and someone in the group muttered: " He's mad; the man's mad."

But even if he heard he took no heed; his eyes were still fixed on the actress who had played the part of Mary Maxwell.

" You wouldn't have shown fear then, Sylvaine Lankester—not if you were such a woman as Mary. You would have shown a steady courage, a supreme indifference, a blazing contempt."

" Extremely interesting," drawled a man standing by. " And may one ask how you happen to know all this? "

" Because that is what Mary Maxwell *did* show," answered the stranger, quietly. " Courage, indifference, contempt—but not fear. A thousand times no; not fear."

Without another word he turned and walked away, leaving the people in the group staring after him open-mouthed. What on earth had he meant—" That is what Mary Maxwell *did* show " ? And then in a moment or two, with a few significant shrugs of their shoulders, they dismissed the matter from their minds. Obviously a lunatic, was the general comment, and lunatics are not very interesting. But I, who had heard it all, was not so sure. To me it had seemed as if there was a ring of sincerity underlying the wild words—a ring of truth. And on the spur of the moment I hurried after him. I overtook him outside the Empire, and touched him on the shoulder. He swung round and stared at me with eyes full of hostility, and for a moment I regretted my hasty impulse.

" What do you want? " he snapped. " I don't know you."

His collar was frayed, his coat was ragged, but there was an indefinable something about his face, now that I saw him close to, which made me determined to go on with it in spite of his uncompromising attitude. The difficulty lay in what line to take with him. I felt that the barest hint of charity would freeze him up like an oyster; there was a strange fierce pride in those sombre eyes of his. And then I had a sudden inspiration.

" I'm an author of sorts," I said, quietly, " and I was in the Alhambra a few minutes ago. I heard what you said to Miss Lankester, and I think, if I may say so, that you were wrong. No woman would show anything but fear in such circumstances."

For a moment he stared at me with a faint, half-contemptuous smile on his lips.

" You think so? " he remarked. " Well, it's you who are wrong—just as Sylvaine

Lankester was wrong. And if you care to supply me with a little dinner to-night—I regret that on threepence-halfpenny I cannot offer to act as host myself—I will prove to you that you are wrong."

"Certainly," I answered at once. "I shall be delighted if you'll dine with me. Shall we say eight o'clock at Bordini's Restaurant in Greek Street?"

"Would it inconvenience you greatly to make it a little earlier?" he said. "Since yesterday at midday I'm afraid I haven't had very much to eat."

"Good Lord! My dear fellow," I cried, aghast, "any time you like. Shall we say seven—or six-thirty?"

"Six-thirty," he answered, promptly. "Bordini's! I know it."

With a quick nod he was gone, leaving me staring after him a little foolishly. Was the man a fraud, or had he really got some strange story hidden in his mind? I strolled towards the club, still wondering.

II.

PROMPTLY at six-thirty I turned through the swing doors of the restaurant to find him sitting at one of the tables inside. I suggested a cocktail, which he refused, and under my breath I cursed myself for a fool. One does not offer cocktails to men who haven't fed for thirty hours or more. Instead I ordered dinner at once, with a pint of the Chianti for which Bordini's is famous. And then for the next half hour I watched one of the most pathetic sights in the world—a gentleman who is starving, with food before him. For the man was a gentleman all right—his hands alone were sufficient to prove it. And he was trying to eat as a gentleman eats, while all the time hunger—stark hunger—was gnawing at him. And I wondered what he'd had even so recently as midday the day before.

But at last he finished, and with another flagon of Chianti between us, and a cigarette alight in his mouth, he leaned back in his

chair and stared at me with a gleam of mocking humour in his eyes.

" And now I suppose I must pay for my dinner," he remarked.

" Damn it ! " I said, a little stiffly, " it was you who suggested it. If you look at it that way, please consider the matter ended and we'll go."

He stood on the edge of the group which surrounded Sylvaine Lankester, and stared at her mockingly.

" Magnificent ! " he sneered. " Why, you were rotten. Rotten, I tell you."

" Forgive me ! " He leaned across the table. " I'm a sarcastic brute, though I wasn't once. But there are some people, my friend, for whom nothing ever seems to go right in this world. Maybe it's their own fault—maybe it isn't. Incidentally, the cause doesn't make much odds—it's the effect that counts."

He broke off abruptly. " How did you like that film to-day ? "

" Very much," I answered. " Very much indeed."

He nodded thoughtfully. " I wrote it."

" You did what ? " I said, staring at him in surprise.

" I wrote it. I wrote the scenario, and I played in the original film."

" But surely," I cried, " that was an original production this afternoon ? It was announced as such."

" Parts of it were original ; parts of it had never been done before. But parts of it had ; I suppose half of it had —quite half. And that half I have seen once on the screen. There's just one copy of it in existence to-day."

" But do these people who produced ' Loaded Dice ' know about it ? " I asked.

" I don't know if they do or not," he answered. " And it doesn't make much odds, because it will never be shown."

" What part did you play ? " I asked.

" Hubert Malden," he remarked, quietly. " The part taken by Carlton Bellairs this afternoon."

I preserved a discreet silence. I could hardly see this lean, cadaverous, down-at-heels man in the character as it had been created for me by Bellairs.

" Yes—I played the part of Hubert Malden," he continued, after a while. " But that's the end of the story. I'll begin at the beginning."

He refilled his glass and lit another cigarette.

" I don't know if you're interested in the film business. I am, or rather "—and he smiled faintly—" I was. Right from the very start the immense possibilities of the moving picture impressed me. Even in those days when the standard consisted of a one-reel play which gave you a headache to look at, I had visualized in my own mind something of the perfection which you can see to-day. And I went into the show heart and soul. I acted a bit, and I did a certain amount of producing—you'll remember that this was in the days before a producer, if he knew his job, could command almost any salary he liked to ask—and in my spare time I wrote one or two scenarios. I didn't attach myself to any particular company ; I was just a free-lance. And though I say it myself, my name was fairly

well known in the industry. What that name is doesn't make much odds; it's forgotten to-day."

HE paused a moment to press out his cigarette.

"One day in London the agent of a certain Italian firm approached me with an offer to produce their new film for them in Italy. They wanted an English producer, as the film was an English film and most of the artistes were English also. They offered me what in those days was quite a considerable sum; to-day a producer would laugh in your face if you mentioned such a figure. However, it was good enough for me, and I accepted. I read the scenario going out to Italy, and was ready to begin work as soon as I arrived. It was just an ordinary straightforward English story, the adaptation of a novel—and I've only mentioned it because I said I'd start at the beginning. That film was the beginning of my acquaintance with—well, shall we call her Mary Maxwell? She was one of the English actresses engaged by the firm, and I fell in love with her the first moment I saw her."

Again he smiled faintly as he looked at me.

"I'm not going to bore you with lovers' rhapsodies," he continued. "I'm only going to say that she was then, and has remained ever since, the loveliest girl I have ever seen. She made one catch one's breath with the wonder of her, and she was utterly and absolutely unspoiled. She was so immeasurably more lovely than Sylvaine Lankester that any comparison even would be ludicrous. And somewhat naturally I was not the only man who had noticed the fact. Love has a knack of quickening up one's powers of observation, and I hadn't been in that studio for two days before I realized that one of the Italian actors in the cast—Paolo Cimetti by name—was in love with her too. A film studio, as you probably know, is a fairly free-and-easy place, and sometimes for hours on end actors and actresses will be sitting about doing nothing, while other scenes in which they do not appear are being taken. Only the producer is busy the whole time, and often it was as much as I could do to concentrate on my job, when I knew that Mary and the Italian were not in the studio where I could see them. I used to imagine things; I used to grow almost mad with jealousy; once I let down a complete scene because my mind was wandering.

"Not that I had the slightest right to be jealous; beyond talking to her as a producer I had hardly said two words to Mary since I had arrived. As far as I knew I was less than nothing to her; but men in the condition I was in are not over-logical. Certain it was that she gave the Italian not the slightest encouragement—at any rate in public, though his attitude to her very soon became obvious to everybody. He followed her about like a dog; he brought her flowers and chocolates, and his eyes used to follow her wherever she was. God! how I hated that man, though I did my best not to show it. But he knew—right from the beginning he knew—and he hated me just as bitterly.

"And then one day came the first flare-up between me and him. He was a good actor—a very good actor—and he was fully aware of the fact. In addition, he was playing lead—by the way, I don't think I mentioned that Mary was also playing lead. And he was fully aware of that fact also. On this particular occasion we were doing a close-up of him alone. In a corner of the studio was Mary talking to someone, and in the middle of the shot her laugh rang out suddenly. And Cimetti looked across at her. It was an unpardonable thing to do, and he knew it, even before I stopped the camera.

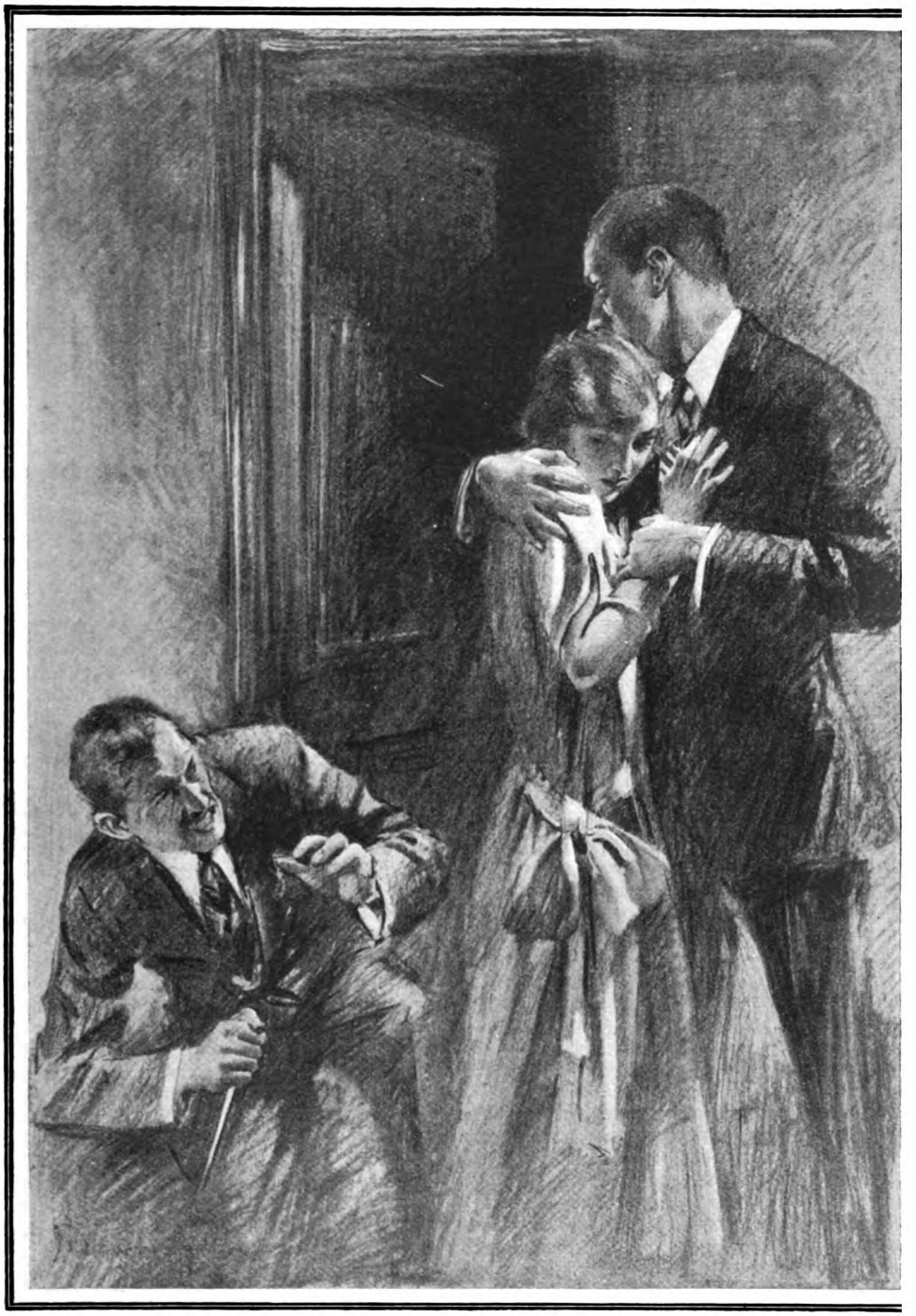
"'Again, please,' I said. 'And kindly pay attention.'

"He said nothing; there was nothing he could say, but for the first time in my life I realized the meaning of the phrase to have murder in one's eyes. There was murder in Cimetti's eyes as he looked at me.

"And then very soon afterwards matters came to a head. What took me upstairs past the dressing-rooms I don't know, but as I rounded a corner I saw Mary struggling in Cimetti's arms. They were standing in the passage outside her room, and he was trying to kiss her whilst she was pushing him away with both her hands. It was enough for me; I hit him on the point of the jaw with every atom of strength I could put into it. And he crashed like a log, hitting his head against the wall as he fell, and then—well, my friend, it's difficult to say how these things happen—I found Mary in my arms, and this time she didn't struggle. Instead she gave me her lips—her wonderful mouth—to kiss."

He said the words almost under his breath, and then for a while sat motionless, staring across the little restaurant thick with the blue haze of tobacco smoke. In his eyes was a look of dumb, hopeless longing; he was back in the past with his memories. For the moment I was forgotten; nothing lived, nothing counted with the man opposite save the touch of a woman's lips on his.

"What is it that Goethe says somewhere?" he continued after a while. "'There are many echoes, but few voices.' There's only been one voice in my life, and that voice



I looked down and saw him, and for a second my heart stood still. He was crouching back against the wall, with every tooth in his head bared in a snarl, and a long stiletto half-pulled from his pocket.

there was no misunderstanding. My love for that girl dwarfed everything else, and when I found that it was the same with her the whole world just changed. You're a stranger to me, and I don't really know why I'm telling you all this, except that you've given me a dinner. I don't know whether you've ever been in love, and—what is far more wonderful—been loved as I was. But if you have, then you will know that I do not exaggerate when I say that no Heaven of imagination can give anything quite so marvellous if it lasts, and no Hell anything quite so agonizing if it ceases. Time heals the wound a little, but it's always there, my friend, it's always there."

Thoughtfully he lit another cigarette.

"However, I'm not here to bore you with a dissertation on love. Let us go back for a moment to where I was standing in the passage with Mary in my arms. Cimetti was forgotten, and then some movement on his part reminded us of his presence. I looked down and saw him, and for a second my heart stood still. He was crouching back against the wall, with every tooth in his head bared in a snarl, and a long stiletto half-pulled from his pocket. But it was his eyes that fascinated me. They were gleaming with such a frenzy of diabolical hatred that for a moment I thought the man was a maniac. And then, even as he saw me looking at him over Mary's shoulder, the madness faded and was replaced by an expressionless mask. So quickly did he control himself that, when I came to think about it afterwards, I wondered if I hadn't made a mistake. Some trick of the light, perhaps, in the passage. He stood up, muttered a word or two of apology to Mary, and walked away. And she shuddered in my arms.

"'He frightens me,' she whispered, and I soothed her and comforted her till she forgot him.

"AND now I must get on. You're wondering, maybe, where the film you saw this afternoon comes in. Well—it comes in very soon. I told you, didn't I? that I had written the scenario of 'Loaded Dice,' and I had taken it with me to Italy to polish it up and round off one or two edges. And one night I read it to Mary. She was immensely struck with it—as you saw for yourself to-day, it made a good film—and she at once suggested to me that I should offer the scenario to the firm we were then working with. Further, she suggested that she and I should play joint lead if the directors agreed. And then we sat together seeing visions and dreaming dreams of the future. How we would stagger the film industry with our consummate acting; how we should leave this small firm we were with and go over to America where the big money lies; above all, how we would get married. We'd do it before we took the Egyptian part of the film, we decided. It wouldn't mean long to wait; the present production was nearly over. Another six weeks, perhaps two months, would see us through all the Italian interiors of 'Loaded Dice,' and then—marriage. Of course, I need hardly tell you that no film is taken in the actual order in which it is shown. All the scenes of any one place are taken at the same time, and later, when the film is finally joined together, they are put into the proper sequence.

"So we dreamed that night, and next day we could scarcely believe our eyes when it seemed as if all the dreams were coming true. The firm jumped at the scenario, and bought it from me on the spot. At first they wanted me to produce it, but Mary pleaded and argued. She was insistent that I should play lead with her, and when the directors discovered that we were engaged they agreed with true Southern gallantry. I'd played lead before, of course, with English companies.

"There was an American producer—quite a well-known man—in Rome at the time, and they engaged him in my place. And then we came to the question of casting the various parts. First and foremost came Edward Latford—the part taken by John Drage to-day. Unanimously they decided on Cimetti, and Mary and I looked at one another. We didn't want him in the cast at all, but there was no possible way of dispensing with him. He was under contract—the firm would have had to pay his salary in any case, and he was a first-class actor. To the directors the choice was obvious, so obvious that to protest against it would have been an impossibility. For, after all, what could we have said? That we didn't like him! Likes and dislikes are as common in the film world as elsewhere—perhaps commoner. And to do the man justice I had to admit to myself that I had no fault to find with his behaviour since Mary and I had become engaged. He had been consistently polite and courteous, and had been one of the first to congratulate me on my good fortune. And so the wheel of fate took another relentless turn towards the inevitable end."

He rested his elbows on the table and stared at me with sombre eyes.

"I suppose you've guessed that end already," he went on, slowly. "Sometimes now, when I look back on the weeks that followed, I nearly go mad. When I realize that all through those wonderful days every beat of the clock was just one second nearer the end, my brain seems almost bursting.

If only one could have known: if only one could have had some premonition of what was to happen. And yet perhaps it was better so. It could have done no good: it would have only made my Mary miserable and unhappy had she been frightened with vague fears of impending danger. Because by the very nature of the thing it was inevitable: you see, *it was a part of the film itself*. And so I who wrote the film am responsible for killing the woman I loved."

HIS hands were clenching and unclenching, and the sweat was glistening on his forehead.

"I killed her, man—I killed her; just as surely, just as inevitably, as that devil Cimetti who actually fired the shot. Listen carefully—for there's not much more to tell.

"You remember the scene, don't you—the climax of the film—where Hubert Malden and Mary Maxwell, having rung the bell for the butler, sit waiting on the sofa and then Edward Latford enters instead: the scene about which I spoke to Sylvaine Lankester this afternoon. It was almost the last scene to be taken before we left and went to Egypt, and though it's so long ago I can recall every detail of that morning.

"Everybody was in the best of spirits—excited over going to Egypt. And as for me—well, you can imagine my feelings. In two days I was going to marry Mary. And as we sat a little apart from the others on the sofa which was to be used in the scene I felt almost dazed with the wonder of it. A carpenter was putting a finishing touch on the door; the photographer was fixing up lights. But at last we were ready and the producer took charge.

"'Now we'll run through this scene,' he began. 'Cimetti—are you ready?' Cimetti, who had just appeared, stepped forward and bowed to Mary. 'You'll open the door slowly,' went on the producer, 'and then you'll stretch out your hand with the revolver in it so that only the shadow is seen by the camera. Try that.'

"Cimetti tried it, and the lights had to be adjusted because there was a double shadow. And all this time Mary and I sat on the sofa, just utterly happy because we were near one another. The actual entrance, you see, was a separate scene into which we didn't come.

"At last we heard the camera turning, and we watched Cimetti come round the door, the revolver in his hand. It was a good entrance, splendid: it couldn't have been done better, and Mary congratulated him. Again he bowed, but for the first time a vague fear shot through me. It seemed to me as if there was a smouldering look in his eyes: as if—— But I hadn't time to worry: it was Mary's turn now and mine. First, Cimetti alone: then Mary and I: then all three of us together in the great scene.

"'You'll get up,' said the producer, 'showing fear and horror. And you,' he said to me, 'make one step forward as if to get in front of her.'

"We tried it once, and it seemed to me as if a mocking smile had shown for a moment on Cimetti's face. But when that scene was over it was his turn to come and congratulate Mary.

"'Fine!' said the producer. 'Now for the last one.'

"The cameras were adjusted, the lights were moved, and Cimetti stayed with us, talking.

"'To-morrow is it—or the next day?' he asked. 'And a honeymoon in Egypt. How delightful—how romantic!'

"The smile glinted again, and once more a dreadful fear shot through me: a presentiment of some awful danger. And yet—what danger could there be? Here—in a film studio, surrounded by people.

"And now the producer was ready, and we ran through the final scene. We faced Cimetti, whose back was towards the camera, and on his lips the smile still lingered.

"'Hold it like that,' said the producer, 'and when I shout "Now," you will fire, Cimetti, and you,' he said to me, 'pitch forward on your face.'

"And so we ran through it—once, twice, and still Cimetti smiled.

"'That's bully.' The producer was rubbing his hands together. 'I think, Miss Maxwell,' he went on, 'that as he falls you had better say: "Oh, God!" as you go on your knees beside him. Camera ready? Right: let's get on with it.'"

The man opposite drew a deep breath.

"And that was the end. The next few records are a little blurred in my mind. The camera started, and with it the smile faded from Cimetti's face, to be replaced by the same look of diabolical hatred that I had seen that day weeks before when I had knocked him down. Only Mary and I could see it; but I think she knew as well as I did that it was no pretence this time. I think she knew as well as I did that the revolver was loaded.

"'Great!' I heard the producer's voice as if from a great distance. And then it came. Simultaneous with the 'Now' there was the crack of a revolver. I felt something sear through me: there was a roaring in my ears, and I knew nothing more."

He paused and lit a cigarette with a hand that trembled a little.

"And if the camera-man had not gone on mechanically turning the handle, it

would have ended there. I should not have said what I did to Miss Lankester to-day, for my Mary was told to show fear, too. But the photographer, dazed by what had happened, went on winding automatically. And the police took the result.

"I saw it six months later when I came out of hospital—still more dead than alive. And when I saw it I wished that Cimetti's aim had been truer in my case. I saw myself facing him: I saw Mary standing beside me. And then, my friend—for the camera doesn't lie—I saw the scene played as it should have been—not as the producer thought it should have been. It was Mary who tried to step in front of me, even as he fired. And then—she didn't say 'Oh, God!' and fall beside me. No: she faced Cimetti for the half second in which she lived with contempt, indifference, and indomitable courage. Of fear there was no trace—no vestige.

"And that was the way that Mary died. I think he shot her through the heart, and she fell on top of me as I lay at her feet, covering me with her dear arms. Then the devil shot himself."

He fell silent, and I was silent too: there seemed to be nothing to say.

"I don't think now that I shall be long in joining her," he went on after a while. "My money is gone: I've dropped out of sight in the film world—and I'm not strong Cimetti's bullet did that for me, though it failed to kill me as I would have wished And Mary—my Mary is calling me to go to her. She wants our honeymoon in Egypt. I think I should have gone before, but I heard our film—Mary's and mine—had been sold to another company, and I wanted to see it

" You'll open the door slowly," went on the producer, " and stretch out your hand with the revolver in it so that only the shadow is seen by the camera." And all this time Mary and I sat on the sofa, happy because we were near one another.

before I met Mary again. You see, I must tell her how they've done it: she'll be interested."

And with that he was gone. It seemed to me as if he had seen someone in the street that he knew, but when I followed him to the door he was walking rapidly towards Shaftesbury Avenue alone. And yet was he alone—or was he talking to someone who walked at his side—someone I could not see ?

The street lamps play strange tricks with one's sight, and maybe it was just my imagination.

It was Bordini himself who looked at me significantly as I paid my bill.

" He always leaves like that—quite suddenly," he said. " Just as if someone had passed the door whom he wanted to overtake. And often the street is empty at the time."

And then he tapped his head.

I wonder. Some day, when I have time, I shall make it my business to find out.

Charles Dickens at the time the early letters to Maria Beadnell were written.

CHARLES DICKENS'S FIRST LOVE

AS REVEALED IN HIS LETTERS NOW FIRST PUBLISHED

BY B. W. MATZ
Editor of "THE DICKENSIAN."

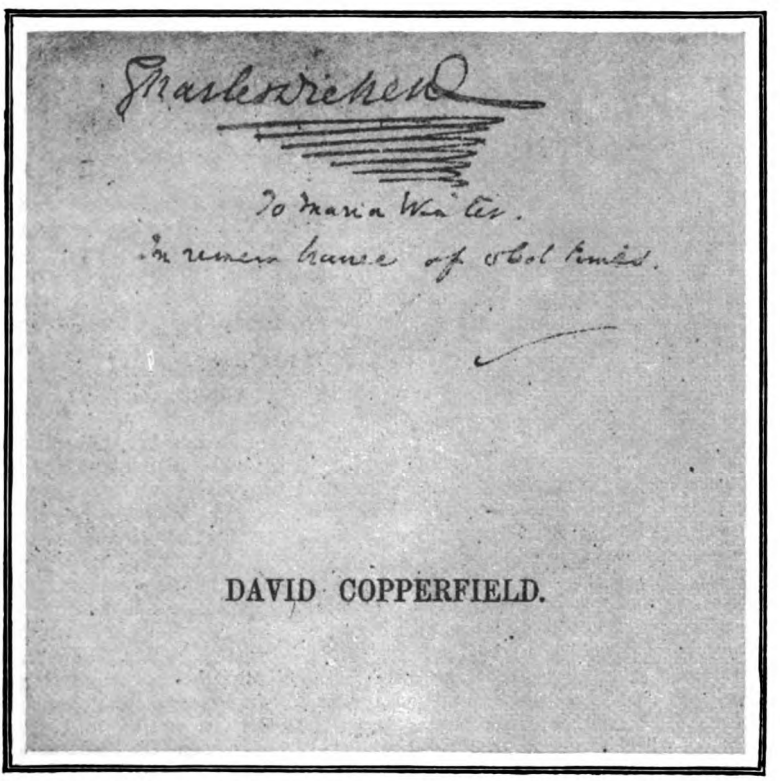
A VERY human romance in the life of Charles Dickens is revealed in some early letters known to but few persons until their American publication in a limited and privately printed edition in 1908. Indeed, so scarce is the book, it is safe to say that, even at the present day, only a few English collectors and their friends have full knowledge of an affair which was not improbably the most significant in the life of the great novelist. But the time has come when the millions who love and revere not only his immortal works, but their author himself, should know more of him than can be gathered from the biographies and letters hitherto generally available. Nor is there that in the romance likely to hurt the feelings of any living persons to whom it relates, or, in the least degree, to detract from Dickens's character as a man. If anything its story will heighten the respect with which he is regarded by all who have studied what is already known of him. Great man as he was—a great man he remains.

The history of the little-known letters may be told briefly. Eighteen in all, they were addressed, five of them to the heroine of the romance, Maria Beadnell, before her marriage to a Mr. Henry Louis Winter, and the remainder to the same lady some twenty-two years later, when, her husband being still alive, the early friendship was renewed. After Mrs. Winter's death they were bought from her daughter and prepared for the Press by the expert, Mr. J. Harrison Stonehouse. They passed to America, where they became the property of Mr. William K. Bixby, a well-known collector in that country. It was this gentleman who authorized their being privately printed.

In the light of their biographical importance and very significant bearing upon the novels, it is astonishing how little seems to have been known of the letters, or, indeed, of the romance involved, by writers most intimate with Dickens's life. The principal biographies make but the barest mention of his having had an early love affair at all. Forster, in spite of a letter he prints from

Dickens with a positive declaration that "nothing could exaggerate the strength of the feeling," says that "although convinced there had been a more actual foundation for those chapters of his book" ("David Copperfield") than he had been ready to suppose, yet "still I could hardly admit it, and that the matter could possibly affect him then" (*i.e.*, after the twenty-two years of estrangement) "persisted in a stout refusal to believe." We shall see from the later letters that there was every reason to believe to the contrary. Again, the younger Dickens, in the Biographical Edition of the Collected Works, is even more sceptical, and dismisses the matter by saying: "There is some reference in Mr. Forster's 'Life' to a 'Dora' who came across Charles Dickens's path very early in his career—when he was eighteen, in fact—but as she married somebody else and developed afterwards into the 'Flora' of 'Little Dorrit,' she could have had in reality very little to do with Dora Spenlow, except in so far as the 'child-wife' was the idealized recollection of the dream of a romantic young man." Yet again, Miss Georgina Hogarth, in printing one of the later letters and a portion of another in the "Letters" she edited, has a mere brief reference to their receiver as "a very dear friend and companion of Charles Dickens in his youth."

We shall begin to see how little the writers above mentioned realized Dickens's true feelings and Maria Beadnell's influence on his life and work when we come to the letters themselves. But some further explanation of the circumstances in which they were written is still necessary to a full comprehension of their story. Dickens in 1830, when barely eighteen years of age, Maria being then nineteen, was introduced to her family, the head of which was George Beadnell, a bank manager, by his friend, Henry Kolle, who, in 1833, was to marry Anne, another of the Beadnell daughters. The young man's prospects were then still very much in the air. The blacking factory period was, of course, long over, and he had also finally given up the Law, but at the time he does not seem as yet to have started on his career as a Parliamentary reporter, and, whatever ambitions he must have had, was certainly not regarded seriously, if at all, as an author. By the Beadnells he was accepted for his engaging social qualities and agreeable personality, but not considered eligible as a suitor. It is not easy to understand Maria's attitude towards him. That she was really in love with him is very doubtful, though, by implication from the later letters—her own, unfortunately, do not exist, having been probably burnt in a great holocaust of general correspondence Dickens made in 1860—it may be gathered that she, in the after years, led him to suppose so. But that she was at first fascinated by his good looks, cleverness, and charm of manner, and that there



Facsimile of the inscription in the copy of "David Copperfield" presented by Charles Dickens to Mrs. Winter, the "Dora" of the novel.

existed some sort of clandestine engagement or mutually implied understanding, is certain. The attachment, at any rate, and whatever it may be called, went on for some two years before, from what was partly due to family influence, Maria "made a man" of the youth, as undoubtedly she did, by a growing coldness and eventual complete rejection.

It was at this period that the correspondence begins—the earlier letters, although undated, from internal and other evidence, having probably been written from March to May, 1833. Kolle, it must be mentioned, acting as go-between or intermediary, was the bearer of these, Dickens by now having become apparently no longer a visitor at the Beadnells' house. The youth must always have had considerable difficulty in finding opportunities for arranging to meet his beloved alone. A volume of letters from Dickens to Kolle, also privately printed in America, confirms the relationship of the two friends, but, with one letter excepted, does not throw much light on the romance itself. The letter—written, probably, before the estrangement—apologizes for troubling Kolle to deliver an enclosed letter to Maria, "which I should not have written, for I should have communicated its contents verbally, were it not that I lost the opportunity of keeping the old gentleman (Mr. Beadnell) out of the way as long as possible last night."

Maria Beadnell (Mrs. Winter).
The original of Dora in "David Copperfield" and of Flora in "Little Dorrit."

That yet other letters, unknown, were written to and fro between the lovers while the affair went comparatively well is not to be doubted from a perusal of the correspondence generally. If they exist, they have yet to be discovered. It seems curious that Maria should have kept the letters of which we know, and not apparently the earlier and, in all likelihood, ardent and—as regards their possible bearing upon her lover's hopes for the future—valuable declarations which must have preceded them. The point makes for interesting speculation. With this debarred, however, by consideration of space, let us turn now to the extant correspondence, leaving it, as largely as possible, to tell its own story. The first of the series, in expressing a painful determination to return "a little present" and certain "other mementoes of our past correspondence," goes on to say:—

"*Our meetings of late have been little more than so many displays of heartless indifference, on the one hand, while on the other they have never failed to prove a fertile source of wretchedness and misery. . . . The result of our past acquaintance is indeed a melancholy one to me. I have felt too long ever to lose the feeling of utter desolation and wretchedness which had succeeded our former correspondence. Thank God I can claim for myself and* feel *that I deserve the merit of having ever throughout our intercourse acted fairly, intelligently, and honourably. Under kindness and encouragement one day and a total change of conduct the next, I have ever been the same. . . .*"

After a breach lasting perhaps two months, during which time the lover was undoubtedly hoping against hope that the fickle one would relent, the next three letters introduce a highly interesting controversial point which will perhaps never be settled except to the personal satisfaction of students of feminine psychology. In the Beadnell circle was a certain Mary Anne Leigh, an intimate friend of Maria's, of whom it is almost impossible to say if she was herself in love with Dickens or if she lent herself to an artful and hypocritical conspiracy between the two girls, whereby to afford Maria fictitious but plausibly reasonable grounds for rejecting the unhappy young genius on a charge of faithlessness. In

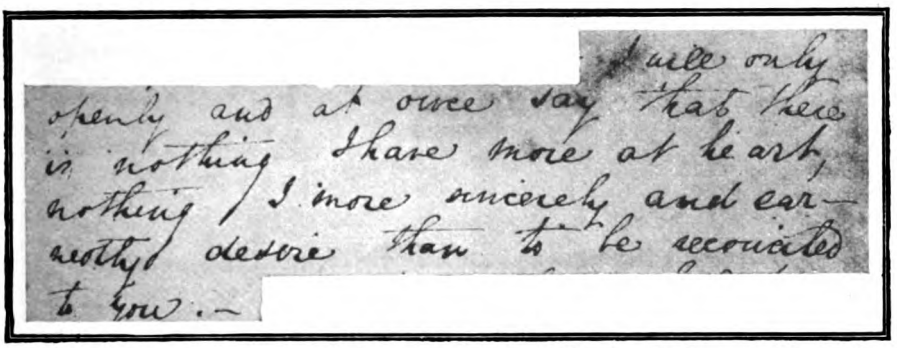
weighing considerations for or against a conspiracy, it must be remembered that in those days the cloistered position of women favoured subtle intrigues hardly to be dreamt of in the philosophy of their freer sisters to-day. Under the poke bonnets and behind the demure countenances of the little misses of a century ago were many inventions and devices lost, perhaps, to their more fortunate—or shall we say less fortunate ?—descendants. But whatever the motives may have been, Mary Anne Leigh undoubtedly threw herself at Dickens's head, stopped at nothing to embroil the lovers and promote misunderstanding, and, having brought matters to a pass which compelled Maria to choose between her word and that of the bewildered victim of feminine fickleness or duplicity, was finally the chief cause of the breaking of the strained relationship. That Dickens was utterly nonplussed by her tactics—or the joint tactics of the two girls—is proved by the following, in which he asks Maria's permission to write to Mary Anne in order to animadvert upon that young person's duplicity and falsehood, and then proceeds :—

" I never, by word or deed, in the slightest manner, directly or by implication, made a confidante of Mary Anne Leigh. . . . Situated as we have been once, I have—laying out of consideration every idea of common honour, not to say common honesty—too often thought of our earlier correspondence, and too often looked back to happy hopes the loss of which have made me the miserable, reckless wretch I am, to breathe the slightest hint to any creature living of one single circumstance that ever passed between us—much less to her. I have now no hesitation in saying that she, quite unasked, volunteered the information that YOU *had made her a confidante* of all that had ever passed between us without reserve. *In proof of which assertion, she not only detailed facts which I undoubtedly thought she could have heard from none but yourself, but she also communicated many things which certainly never occurred at all. . . . I have no hopes to express, no wishes to communicate . . . I have been so long used to inward wretchedness and real, real misery, that it matters little, very little, to me what others may think of or what becomes of me. . . ."*

In another letter, evidently closely following the above, the unhappy lover goes on to say that he

" cannot forbear replying to your note this moment received, Miss Beadnell, because you really seem to have made two mistakes. In the first place, you do not exactly understand the nature of my feelings with regard to your alleged communications to M. A. L., and in the next you certainly totally and entirely misunderstand my feeling with regard to her. . . . That she has for some reason, and to suit her own purposes, of late thrown herself in my way, I could plainly see. . . . I have borne more from you than I do believe any creature breathing ever bore from a woman before. . . . My feeling on one *subject was early roused, it has been strong, and it will be lasting. . . . Destitute as I am of hope or comfort, I have borne much, and I dare say I can bear more. . . ."*

Tongues were wagging furiously, no doubt; and Dickens received little sympathy even from his sister Fanny, whom he



Facsimile of a sentence from one of the early letters of Charles Dickens to Maria Beadnell quoted on the next page.

swore he would " never forgive, not if I live a hundred years," for not telling him what she knew. Kolle's *fiancée*, Anne Beadnell, was no less reticent. " My dear Charles," she replied to a despairing appeal, " I really cannot understand Maria, or venture to take any responsibility of saying what the state of her affections is." Alto-

gether, at this time Dickens must have been in a parlous, not to say perilous, condition of mind; the one real gleam of hope being in the fine pride which dared to say it could "bear more" and makes these letters, for all their pathos, so truly heartening.

One last desperate but dignified attempt at a reconciliation, however, he made before resigning himself to the inevitable and nerving himself towards recovery and the new life which was shortly to begin and soon proceed ("Pickwick" was started in 1836) in a blaze of triumph. This letter was the last of the first series, written before those of twenty-two years later. After refusing directly to undertake any argumentative controversy with Miss Leigh he proceeds:

"I will only openly and at once say that there is nothing I have more at heart, nothing I more sincerely and earnestly desire, than to be reconciled to you. . . . I have no guide to ascertain your present feelings, and I have, God knows, no means of influencing them in my favour. I never have loved and I can never love any human creature breathing but yourself . . . and the love I now tender you is as pure and as lasting as at any period of our former correspondence. . . . The matter now, of course, rests solely with you, and you will decide as your own feelings and wishes direct you. . . ."

Charles Dickens.

There the matter, for the years between, ended.

"You answered me coldly and reproachfully," says Dickens in one of the letters of after years, "and so I went my way"—a statement certainly not in accord with the lady's later assurances that she was at the time really in love with him. In making such assurances she was then probably under the glamour of the great name he had made in the meantime, and he, in accepting them, as he did, saw them through the veil of sentimental memory. But before coming to the second series of letters it can scarcely be doubted that the passionate and sincere tone of the first series reveals anything but what their writer affirms they did.

The later letters confirm the impression received from the earlier ones. It was Maria who, middle-aged and married, revived the romance, inspired thereto by who knows what of ghosts of memories urgently demanding reincarnation, perhaps, some real, long-repressed feeling, and the fascination of the fame her early lover had achieved. None of her correspondence, as has been said, is available, but she seems to have written him in February, 1855, a letter to which he replied with sufficient cordiality and more—

"the associations my memory has with you make your letter more . . . invest it with a more immediate address to me than such a letter could have from anybody else"

—to encourage her to send another, evidently, from his reply to it, much less reserved and more intimate. With what deep emotions he must have penned the reply may be imagined from the following extracts:—

"I hope now you know me better you will teach her (Mrs. Winter's daughter) to tell her children . . . that I loved her mother with the most extraordinary earnestness when I was a boy.

"I have always believed since, and always shall to the last, that there never was such a faithful and devoted poor fellow as I was. Whatever of fancy, romance, energy, passion, aspiration, and determination belong to me, I never have separated and never shall separate from the hard-hearted little woman—you—whom it is nothing to say I would have died for, with the greatest alacrity! I never can think, and I never seem to observe, that other young people are in such desperate earnest or set so much, so long, upon one absorbing hope. It is a matter of perfect certainty to me that I began to fight my way out of poverty and obscurity with one perpetual idea of you

This is so fixed in my knowledge that to the hour when I opened your letter last Friday night I have never heard anybody addressed by your name, or spoken of by your name, without a start. The sound of it has always filled me with a kind of pity and respect for the deep truth that I had, in my silly hobbledehoyhood, to bestow upon one creature who represented the whole world to me. I have never been so good a man since as I was when you made me wretchedly happy. I shall never be half so good a fellow any more. . . ."

After the above utterance, so fervent and yet, it will be observed, expressed with the restraint of the artist long master of his medium, he goes on to a subject which students of the novels will readily recognize as being of the utmost importance.

"*I fancy—though you may not have thought in the old time how manfully I loved you—that you may have seen in one of my books a faithful reflection of the passion I had for you, and may have thought that it was something to have been loved so well and may have seen in little bits of 'Dora' touches of your old self sometimes, and a grace here and there that may be revived in your little girls, years hence, for the bewilderment of some other young lover—though he will never be as terribly in earnest as I and David Copperfield were. People used to say to me how pretty all that was, and how fanciful it was, and how elevated it was above the little foolish loves of very young men and women. But they little thought what reason I had to know it was true, and nothing more nor less. . . .*"

The lovers of years gone by must have met within the next few days, for the letters, the next of which—a short note, accompanying gifts, excepted—is dated 10th March, 1855, though kind, friendly, and at times affectionate, are thenceforward, on the whole, short, formal, and even evasive. That he should have turned her into the flippant and garrulous Flora Finching of "Little Dorrit" is, of course, in keeping with his fantastic humour, that could resist no opportunity of making use of actual experience. But apart from the exigencies of space there is but little need for further speculation. The story is complete without it. Enough that what of illusion the romance contained had vanished.

That it had its real elements is obvious from the correspondence, essential extracts from which are here presented, and from the fact that so many of the novels—"David Copperfield," "Little Dorrit," and "Great Expectations," among others—bear strong traces of its influence. It furnishes a key, indeed, to the characters and incidents of the novels which cannot be ignored and must be dealt with at length by any future critic. And to the Dickens student, what an attractive and enjoyable task would be the tracking of that influence! It may be the subject of a future article. In the meantime, with the story of these letters now for the first time available to the general public, as distinct from the comparatively small world of private collectors, it is certain that their publication cannot but add lustre to a name already great, revered, and beloved—the name of Charles Dickens.

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Help yourself—to what is here.

1. Less than twenty-one is he,
2. Here must Pope bisected be.
3. Mighty waterfall we see.
4. Four of them will make a pound.
5. Highest mountain here is found.
6. Moral truth should here abound.
7. Trisyllabic word, repeat.
8. Furthest. Two of them will meet.
9. Fabric, nonsense, overeat.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 113 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, The Strand Magazine, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than December 12th. They must be written on half-sheets of paper, or on cards, and signed at the foot with a pseudonym consisting of only one word. Flimsy paper should not be used.

One alternative answer may be sent to each light.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 112.

1.	M	ello	W
2.	A	ntoin	E
3.	R	hoecu	S
4.	L	is	T
5.	B	eckenha	M
6.	O	l	I
7.	R	ega	N
8.	O	urselve	S
9.	U	lie	T
10.	G	enuin	E
11.	H	orne	R

Notes.—Light 1. Yellow, fellow, bellow. 2. Watt; water, *eau*. Watteau. 3. Lowell, Rhoecus. 4. A printed list; the material. Literal, referring to letters: L is not T. 6. Gath, Goliath. 7. Anagrams: Lear and earl, Regan and anger. 8. French, *ours*, bear; elves. 9. Verona, buried in "river on a map"; Juliet. 10. Earl, real, genuine. 11. Corner, horned.

Solvers are requested to send, with their answers to No. 113, their real names and addresses also. These should be written at the back of their solutions, except in the case of postcards.

The Magic Plus Fours

by

P. G. WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY J. H. THORPE

"AFTER all," said the young man, "golf is only a game."

He spoke bitterly and with the air of one who has been following a train of thought. He had come into the smoking-room of the club-house in low spirits at the dusky close of a November evening, and for some minutes had been sitting, silent and moody, staring at the log fire.

"Merely a pastime," said the young man.

The Oldest Member, nodding in his arm-chair, stiffened with horror, and glanced quickly over his shoulder to make sure that none of the waiters had heard these terrible words.

"Can this be George William Pennefather speaking!" he said, reproachfully. "My boy, you are not yourself."

The young man flushed a little beneath his tan: for he had had a good upbringing and was not bad at heart.

"Perhaps I ought not to have gone quite so far as that," he admitted. "I was only thinking that a fellow's got no right, just because he happens to have come on a bit in his form lately, to treat a fellow as if a fellow was a leper or something."

The Oldest Member's face cleared, and he breathed a relieved sigh.

"Ah! I see," he said. "You spoke hastily and in a sudden fit of pique because something upset you out on the links to-day. Tell me all. Let me see, you were playing with Nathaniel Frisby this afternoon, were you not? I gather that he beat you."

"Yes, he did. Giving me a third. But it isn't being beaten that I mind. What I object to is having the blighter behave as if he were a sort of champion condescending to a mere mortal. Dash it, it seemed to bore him playing with me. Every time I sliced off the tee he looked at me as if I were a painful ordeal. Twice when I was having a bit of trouble in the bushes I caught him yawning. And after we had finished he started talking about what a good game croquet was, and he wondered more people didn't take it up. And it's only a month or so ago that I could play the man level!"

The Oldest Member shook his snowy head sadly.

"There is nothing to be done about it," he said. "We can only hope that the poison will in time work its way out of the man's system. Sudden success at golf is like the sudden acquisition of wealth. It is apt to unsettle and deteriorate the character. And, as it comes almost miraculously, so only a miracle can effect a cure. The best advice I can give you is to refrain from playing with Nathaniel Frisby till you can keep your tee-shots straight."

"Oh, but don't run away with the idea that I wasn't pretty good off the tee this afternoon!" said the young man. "I should like to describe to you the shot I did on the——"

"Meanwhile," proceeded the Oldest Member, "I will relate to you a little story which bears on what I have been saying."

"From the very moment I addressed the ball——"

"It is the story of two loving hearts temporarily estranged owing to the sudden and unforeseen proficiency of one of the couple——"

"I waggled quickly and strongly, like

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Duncan. Then, swinging smoothly back, rather in the Vardon manner——"

"But as I see," said the Oldest Member, "that you are all impatience for me to begin, I will do so without further preamble."

TO the philosophical student of golf like myself (said the Oldest Member) perhaps the most outstanding virtue of this noble pursuit is the fact that it is a medicine for the soul. Its great service to humanity is that it teaches human beings that, whatever petty triumphs they may have achieved in other walks of life, they are after all merely human. It acts as a corrective against sinful pride. I attribute the insane arrogance of the later Roman emperors almost entirely to the fact that, never having played golf, they never knew that strange, chastening humility which is engendered by a topped chip-shot. If Cleopatra had been outed in the first round of the Ladies' Singles, we should have heard a lot less of her proud imperiousness. And, coming down to modern times, it was undoubtedly his rotten golf that kept Wallace Chesney the nice unspoiled fellow he was. For in every other respect he had everything in the world calculated to make a man conceited and arrogant. He was the best-looking man for miles around; his health was perfect; and in addition to this he was rich; danced, rode, played bridge and polo with equal skill; and was engaged to be married to Charlotte Dix. And when you saw Charlotte Dix you realized that being engaged to her would by itself have been quite enough luck for any one man.

But Wallace, as I say, despite all his advantages, was a thoroughly nice, modest young fellow. And I attribute this to the fact that, while one of the keenest golfers in the club, he was also one of the worst players. Indeed, Charlotte Dix used to say to me in his presence that she could not understand why people paid money to go to the circus when by merely walking over the brow of a hill they could watch Wallace Chesney trying to get out of the bunker by the eleventh green. And Wallace took the gibe with perfect good humour, for there was a delightful camaraderie between them which robbed it of any sting. Often at lunch in the club-house I used to hear him and Charlotte planning the handicapping details of a proposed match between Wallace and a non-existent cripple whom Charlotte claimed to have discovered in the village —it being agreed finally that he should accept seven bisques from the cripple, but that, if the latter ever recovered the use of his arms, Wallace should get a stroke a hole.

In short, a thoroughly happy and united young couple. Two hearts, if I may coin an expression, that beat as one.

I would not have you misjudge Wallace Chesney. I may have given you the impression that his attitude towards golf was light and frivolous, but such was not the case. As I have said, he was one of the keenest members of the club. Love made him receive the joshing of his *fiancée* in the kindly spirit in which it was meant, but at heart he was as earnest as you could wish. He practised early and late; he bought golf books; and the mere sight of a patent club of any description acted on him like catnip on a cat. I remember remonstrating with him on the occasion of his purchasing a wooden-faced driving-mashie which weighed about two pounds, and was, taking it for all in all, as foul an instrument as ever came out of the workshop of a clubmaker who had been dropped on the head by his nurse when a baby.

"I know, I know," he said, when I had finished indicating some of the weapon's more obvious defects. "But the point is, I believe in it. It gives me confidence. I don't believe you could slice with a thing like that if you tried."

Confidence! That was what Wallace Chesney lacked, and that, as he saw it, was the prime grand secret of golf. Like an alchemist on the track of the Philosopher's Stone, he was for ever seeking for something which would really give him confidence. I recollect that he even tried repeating to himself fifty times every morning the words, "Every day in every way I grow better and better." This, however, proved such a black lie that he gave it up. The fact is, the man was a visionary, and it is to auto-hypnosis of some kind that I attribute the extraordinary change that came over him at the beginning of his third season.

You may have noticed in your perambulations about the City a shop bearing above its door and upon its windows the legend :—

COHEN BROS.,

SECOND-HAND CLOTHIERS,

a statement which is borne out by endless vistas seen through the door of every variety of what is technically known as Gents' Wear. But the Brothers Cohen, though their main stock-in-trade is garments which have been rejected by their owners for one reason or another, do not confine their dealings to Gents' Wear. The place is a museum of derelict goods of every description. You can get a second-hand revolver there, or a second-hand sword, or a second-hand umbrella. You can do a cheap deal in field-glasses, trunks, dog

collars, canes, photograph frames, attaché cases, and bowls for goldfish. And on the bright spring morning when Wallace Chesney happened to pass by there was exhibited in the window a putter of such preeminently lunatic design that he stopped dead as if he had run into an invisible wall, and then, panting like an overwrought fish, charged in through the door.

THE shop was full of the Cohen family, sombre-eyed, smileless men with purposeful expressions; and two of these, instantly descending upon Wallace Chesney like leopards, began in swift silence to thrust him into a suit of yellow tweed. Having worked the coat over his shoulders with a shoe-horn, they stood back to watch the effect.

"A beautiful fit," announced Isidore Cohen.

"A little snug under the arms," said his brother Irving. "But that'll give."

"The warmth of the body will make it give," said Isidore.

"Or maybe you'll lose weight in the summer," said Irving.

Wallace, when he had struggled out of the coat and was able to breathe, said that he had come in to buy a putter. Isidore thereupon sold him the putter, a dog collar, and a set of studs, and Irving sold him a fireman's helmet: and he was about to leave when their elder brother Lou, who had just finished fitting out another customer, who had come in to buy a cap, with two pairs of trousers and a miniature aquarium for keeping newts in, saw that business was in progress and strolled up. His fathomless eye rested on Wallace, who was toying feebly with the putter.

"You play golf?" asked Lou. "Then looka here!"

He dived into an alleyway of dead clothing, dug for a moment, and emerged with something at the sight of which Wallace Chesney, hardened golfer that he was, blenched and threw up an arm defensively.

"No, no!" he cried.

The object which Lou Cohen was waving insinuatingly before his eyes was a pair of those golfing breeches which are technically known as Plus Fours. A player of two years' standing, Wallace Chesney was not unfamiliar with Plus Fours—all the club cracks wore them—but he had never seen Plus Fours like these. What might be termed the main *motif* of the fabric was a curious vivid pink, and with this to work on the architect had let his imagination run free, and had produced so much variety in the way of chessboard squares of white, yellow, violet, and green that the eye swam as it looked upon them.

"These were made to measure for Sandy McHoots, the Open Champion," said Lou, stroking the left leg lovingly. "But he sent 'em back for some reason or other."

"Perhaps they frightened the children," said Wallace, recollecting having heard that Mr. McHoots was a married man.

"They'll fit you nice," said Lou.

"Sure they'll fit him nice," said Isidore warmly.

"Why, just take a look at yourself in the glass," said Irving, "and see if they don't fit you nice."

And, as one who wakes from a trance, Wallace discovered that his lower limbs were now encased in the prismatic garment. At what point in the proceedings the brethren had slipped them on him, he could not have said. But he was undeniably in.

Wallace looked in the glass. For a moment, as he eyed his reflection, sheer horror gripped him. Then suddenly, as he gazed, he became aware that his first feelings were changing. The initial shock over, he was becoming calmer. He waggled his right leg with a certain sang-froid.

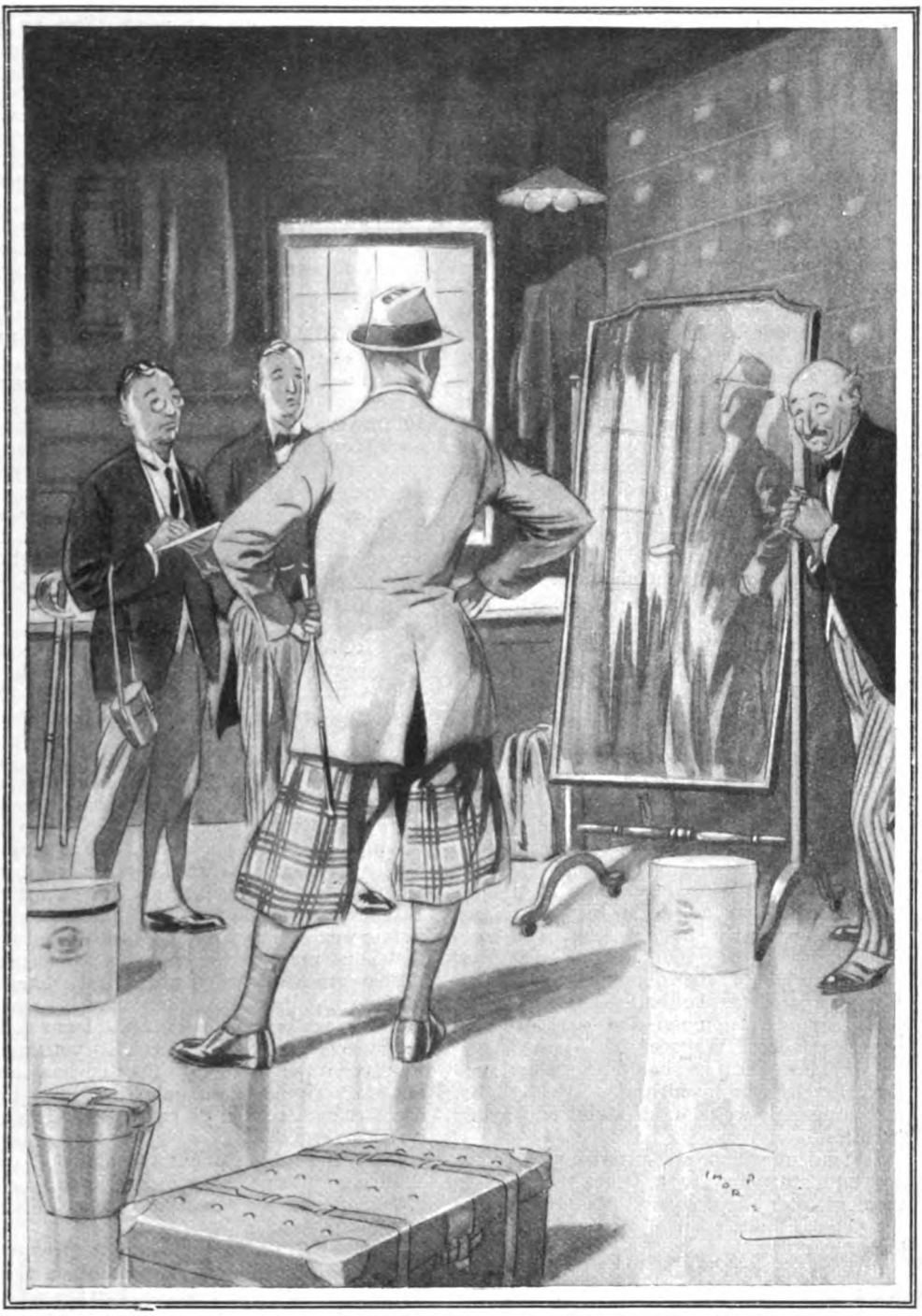
There is a certain passage in the works of the poet Pope with which you may be familiar. It runs as follows:—

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
As to be hated needs but to be seen:
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

Even so was it with Wallace Chesney and these Plus Fours. At first he had recoiled from them as any decent-minded man would have done. Then, after a while, almost abruptly he found himself in the grip of a new emotion. After an unsuccessful attempt to analyse this, he suddenly got it. Amazing as it may seem, it was pleasure that he felt. He caught his eye in the mirror, and it was smirking. Now that the things were actually on, by Hutchinson, they didn't look half-bad. By Braid, they didn't. There was a sort of something about them. Take away that expanse of bare leg with its unsightly sock-suspender and substitute a woolly stocking, and you would have the lower section of a golfer. For the first time in his life, he thought, he looked like a man who could play golf.

There came to him an odd sensation of masterfulness. He was still holding the putter, and now he swung it up above his shoulder. A fine swing, all lissomeness and supple grace, quite different from any swing he had ever done before.

Wallace Chesney gasped. He knew that at last he had discovered that prime grand secret of golf for which he had searched so long. It was the costume that did it. All you had to do was wear Plus Fours. He



Now that the things were actually on, by Hutchinson, they didn't look half bad. By Braid, they didn't. For the first time in his life, he thought, he looked like a man who could play golf.

had always hitherto played in grey flannel trousers. Naturally he had not been able to do himself justice. Golf required an easy dash, and how could you be easily dashing in concertina-shaped trousers with a patch on the knee? He saw now—what he had never seen before—that it was not because they were crack players that crack players wore Plus Fours: it was because they wore Plus Fours that they were crack players. And these Plus Fours had been the property of an Open Champion. Wallace Chesney's bosom swelled, and he was filled, as by some strange gas, with joy—with excitement—with confidence. Yes, for the first time in his golfing life, he felt really confident.

True, the things might have been a shade less gaudy: they might perhaps have hit the eye with a slightly less violent punch: but what of that? True, again, he could scarcely hope to avoid the censure of his club-mates when he appeared like this on the links: but what of *that?* His club-mates must set their teeth and learn to bear these Plus Fours like men. That was what Wallace Chesney thought about it. If they did not like his Plus Fours, let them go and play golf somewhere else.

"How much?" he muttered, thickly. And the Brothers Cohen clustered grimly round with note-books and pencils.

IN predicting a stormy reception for his new apparel, Wallace Chesney had not been unduly pessimistic. The moment he entered the club-house Disaffection reared its ugly head. Friends of years' standing called loudly for the committee, and there was a small and vehement party of the left wing, headed by Raymond Gandle, who was an artist by profession, and consequently had a sensitive eye, which advocated the tearing off and public burial of the obnoxious garment. But, prepared as he had been for some such demonstration on the part of the coarser-minded, Wallace had hoped for better things when he should meet Charlotte Dix, the girl who loved him. Charlotte, he had supposed, would understand and sympathize.

Instead of which, she uttered a piercing cry and staggered to a bench, whence a moment later she delivered her ultimatum.

"Quick!" she said. "Before I have to look again"

"What do you mean?"

"Pop straight back into the changing-room while I've got my eyes shut, and remove the fancy-dress."

"What's wrong with them?"

"Darling," said Charlotte, "I think it's sweet and patriotic of you to be proud of your cycling club colours or whatever they are, but you mustn't wear them on the links. It will unsettle the caddies."

"They *are* a trifle on the bright side," admitted Wallace. "But it helps my game, wearing them. I was trying a few practice-shots just now, and I couldn't go wrong. Slammed the ball on the meat every time. They inspire me, if you know what I mean. Come on, let's be starting."

Charlotte opened her eyes incredulously.

"You can't seriously mean that you're really going to *play* in—those? It's against the rules. There must be a rule somewhere in the book against coming out looking like a sunset. Won't you go and burn them for my sake?"

"But I tell you they give me confidence. I sort of squint down at them when I'm addressing the ball, and I feel like a pro."

"Then the only thing to do is for me to play you for them. Come on, Wally, be a sportsman. I'll give you a half and play you for the whole outfit—the breeches, the red jacket, the little cap, and the belt with the snake's-head buckle. I'm sure all those things must have gone with the breeches. Is it a bargain?"

STROLLING on the club-house terrace some two hours later, Raymond Gandle encountered Charlotte and Wallace coming up from the eighteenth green.

"Just the girl I wanted to see," said Raymond. "Miss Dix, I represent a select committee of my fellow-members, and I have come to ask you on their behalf to use the influence of a good woman to induce Wally to destroy those Plus Fours of his, which we all consider nothing short of Bolshevik propaganda and a menace to the public weal. May I rely on you?"

"You may not," retorted Charlotte. "They are the poor boy's mascot. You've no idea how they have improved his game. He has just beaten me hollow. I am going to try to learn to bear them, so you must. Really, you've no notion how he has come on. My cripple won't be able to give him more than a couple of bisques if he keeps up this form."

"It's something about the things," said Wallace. "They give me confidence."

"They give *me* a pain in the neck," said Raymond Gandle.

TO the thinking man nothing is more remarkable in this life than the way in which Humanity adjusts itself to conditions which at their outset might well have appeared intolerable. Some great cataclysm occurs, some storm or earthquake, shaking the community to its foundations; and after the first pardonable consternation one finds

the sufferers resuming their ordinary pursuits as if nothing had happened. There have been few more striking examples of this adaptability than the behaviour of the members of our golf-club under the impact of Wallace Chesney's Plus Fours. For the first few days it is not too much to say that they were stunned. Nervous players sent their caddies on in front of them at blind holes, so that they might be warned in time of Wallace's presence ahead and not have him happening to them all of a sudden. And even the pro was not unaffected. Brought up in Scotland in an atmosphere of tartan kilts, he nevertheless winced, and a startled "Hoots!" was forced from his lips when Wallace Chesney suddenly appeared in the valley as he was about to drive from the fifth tee.

But in about a week conditions were back to normalcy. Within ten days the Plus Fours became a familiar feature of the landscape, and were accepted as such without comment. They were pointed out to strangers together with the waterfall, the Lovers' Leap, and the view from the eighth green as things you ought not to miss when visiting the course; but apart from that one might almost say they were ignored. And meanwhile Wallace Chesney continued day by day to make the most extraordinary progress in his play.

As I said before, and I think you will agree with me when I have told you what happened subsequently, it was probably a case of auto-hypnosis. There is no other sphere in which a belief in oneself has such immediate effects as it has in golf. And Wallace, having acquired self-confidence, went on from strength to strength. In under a week he had ploughed his way through the Unfortunate Incidents—of which class Peter Willard was the best example—and was challenging the fellows who kept three shots in five somewhere on the fairway. A month later he was holding his own with ten-handicap men. And by the middle of the summer he was so far advanced that his name occasionally cropped up in speculative talks on the subject of the July medal. One might have been excused for supposing that, as far as Wallace Chesney was concerned, all was for the best in the best of all possible worlds.

And yet——

THE first inkling I received that anything was wrong came through a chance meeting with Raymond Gandle, who happened to pass my gate on his way back from the links just as I drove up in my taxi; for I had been away from home for many weeks on a protracted business tour. I welcomed Gandle's advent and invited him in to smoke a pipe and put me abreast of local gossip. He came readily enough—and seemed, indeed, to have something on his mind and to be glad of the opportunity of revealing it to a sympathetic auditor.

"And how," I asked him, when we were comfortably settled, "did your game this afternoon come out?"

"Oh, he beat me," said Gandle, and it seemed to me that there was a note of bitterness in his voice.

"Then He, whoever he was, must have been an extremely competent performer?" I replied, courteously, for Gandle was one of the finest players in the club. "Unless, of course, you were giving him some impossible handicap."

"No; we played level."

"Indeed! Who was your opponent?"

"Chesney."

"Wallace Chesney! And he beat you, playing level! This is the most amazing thing I have ever heard."

"He's improved out of all knowledge."

"He must have done. Do you think he would ever beat you again?"

"No. Because he won't have the chance."

"You surely do not mean that you will not play him because you are afraid of being beaten?"

"It isn't being beaten I mind——"

And if I omit to report the remainder of his speech it is not merely because it contained expressions with which I am reluctant to sully my lips, but because, omitting these expletives, what he said was almost word for word what you were saying to me just now about Nathaniel Frisby. It was, it seemed, Wallace Chesney's manner, his arrogance, his attitude of belonging to some superior order of being that had so wounded Raymond Gandle. Wallace Chesney had, it appeared, criticized Gandle's mashie-play in no friendly spirit; had hung up the game on the fourteenth tee in order to show him how to place his feet; and on the way back to the club-house had said that the beauty of golf was that the best player could enjoy a round even with a dud, because, though there might be no interest in the match, he could always amuse himself by playing for his medal score.

I was profoundly shaken.

"Wallace Chesney!" I exclaimed. "Was it really Wallace Chesney who behaved in the manner you describe?"

"Unless he's got a twin brother of the same name, it was."

"Wallace Chesney a victim to swelled head! I can hardly credit it."

"Well, you needn't take my word for it unless you want to. Ask anybody. It isn't often he can get anyone to play with him now."

"You horrify me!"

Raymond Gandle smoked awhile in brooding silence.

"You've heard about his engagement?" he said at length.

"I have heard nothing, nothing. What about his engagement?"

"Charlotte Dix has broken it off."

"No!"

"Yes. Couldn't stand him any longer."

I got rid of Gandle as soon as I could. I made my way as quickly as possible to the house where Charlotte lived with her aunt. I was determined to sift this matter to the bottom and to do all that lay in my power to heal the breach between two young people for whom I had a great affection.

"I have just heard the news," I said, when the aunt had retired to some secret lair, as aunts do, and Charlotte and I were alone.

"What news?" said Charlotte, dully. I thought she looked pale and ill, and she had certainly grown thinner.

"This dreadful news about your engagement to Wallace Chesney. Tell me, why did you do this thing? Is there no hope of a reconciliation?"

"Not unless Wally becomes his old self again."

"But I had always regarded you two as ideally suited to one another."

"Wally has changed completely in the last few weeks. Haven't you heard?"

"Only sketchily, from Raymond Gandle."

"I refuse," said Charlotte, proudly, all the woman in her leaping to her eyes, "to marry a man who treats me as if I were a kronen at the present rate of exchange, merely because I slice an occasional tee-shot. The afternoon I broke off the engagement"—her voice shook, and I could see that her indifference was but a mask—"the afternoon I broke off the en-gug-gug-gagement, he t-told me I ought to use an iron off the tee instead of a dud-dud-driver."

And the stricken girl burst into an uncontrollable fit of sobbing. And realizing that, if matters had gone as far as that, there was little I could do, I pressed her hand silently and left her.

BUT though it seemed hopeless I decided to persevere. I turned my steps towards Wallace Chesney's bungalow, resolved to make one appeal to the man's better feelings. He was in his sitting-room when I arrived, polishing a putter; and it seemed significant to me even in that tense moment that the putter was quite an ordinary one, such as any capable player might use. In the brave old happy days of his dudhood, the only putters you ever found in the society of Wallace Chesney were patent self-adjusting things that looked like croquet mallets that had taken the wrong turning in childhood.

"Well, Wallace, my boy," I said.

"Hallo!" said Wallace Chesney. "So you're back?"

We fell into conversation, and I had not been in the room two minutes before I realized that what I had been told about the change in him was nothing more than the truth. The man's bearing and his every remark were insufferably bumptious. He spoke of his prospects in the July medal competition as if the issue were already settled. He scoffed at his rivals.

I had some little difficulty in bringing the talk round to the matter which I had come to discuss.

"My boy," I said at length, "I have just heard the sad news."

"What sad news?"

"I have been talking to Charlotte——"

"Oh, that!" said Wallace Chesney.

"She was telling me——"

"Perhaps it's all for the best."

"All for the best? What do you mean?"

"Well," said Wallace, "one doesn't wish, of course, to say anything ungallant, but, after all, poor Charlotte's handicap *is* fourteen and wouldn't appear to have much chance of getting any lower. I mean, there's such a thing as a fellow throwing himself away."

Was I revolted at these callous words? For a moment, yes. Then it struck me that, though he had uttered them with a light laugh, that laugh had had in it more than a touch of bravado. I looked at him keenly. There was a bored, discontented expression in his eyes, a line of pain about his mouth.

"My boy," I said, gravely, "you are not happy."

For an instant I think he would have denied the imputation. But my visit had coincided with one of those twilight moods in which a man requires above all else sympathy. He uttered a weary sigh.

"I'm fed up," he admitted. "It's a funny thing. When I was a dud, I used to think how perfect it must be to be scratch. I used to watch the cracks buzzing round the course and envy them. It's all a fraud. The only time when you enjoy golf is when an occasional decent shot is enough to make you happy for the day. I'm plus two, and I'm bored to death. I'm too good. And what's the result? Everybody's jealous of me. Everybody's got it in for me. Nobody loves me."

His voice rose in a note of anguish, and at the sound his terrier, which had been

"The afternoon I broke off the en-gug-gug-gagement, he t-told me I ought to use an iron off the tee instead of a dud-dud-driver."

sleeping on the rug, crept forward and licked his hand.

"The dog loves you," I said, gently, for I was touched.

"Yes, but I don't love the dog," said Wallace Chesney.

"Now come, Wallace," I said. "Be reasonable, my boy. It is only your unfortunate manner on the links which has made you perhaps a little unpopular at the moment. Why not pull yourself up? Why ruin your whole life with this arrogance? All that you need is a little tact, a little forbearance. Charlotte, I am sure, is just as fond of you as ever, but you have wounded her pride. Why must you be unkind about her tee-shots?"

Wallace Chesney shook his head despondently.

"I can't help it," he said. "It exasperates me to see anyone foozling, and I have to say so."

"Then there is nothing to be done," I said, sadly.

ALL the medal competitions at our club are, as you know, important events; but, as you are also aware, none of them is looked forward to so keenly or contested so hotly as the one in July. At the beginning of the year of which I am speaking, Raymond Gandle had been considered the probable winner of the fixture; but as the season progressed and Wallace Chesney's skill developed to such a remarkable extent most of us were reluctantly inclined to put our money on the latter. Reluctantly, because Wallace's unpopularity was now so general that the thought of his winning was distasteful to all. It grieved me to see how cold his fellow-members were towards him. He drove off from the first tee without a preliminary hand-clap; and, though the drive was of admirable quality and nearly carried the green, there was not a single cheer. I noticed Charlotte Dix among the spectators. The poor girl was looking sad and wan.

In the draw for partners Wallace had had Peter Willard allotted to him; and he muttered to me in a quite audible voice that it was as bad as handicapping him half-a-dozen strokes to make him play with such a hopeless performer. I do not think Peter heard, but it would not have made much difference to him if he had, for I doubt if

anything could have had much effect for the worse on his game. Peter Willard always entered for the medal competition, because he said that competition-play was good for the nerves.

On this occasion he topped his ball badly, and Wallace lit his pipe with the exaggeratedly patient air of an irritated man. When Peter topped his second also, Wallace was moved to speech.

"For goodness' sake," he snapped, "what's the good of playing at all if you insist on lifting your head? Keep it down, man, keep it down. You don't need to watch to see where the ball is going. It isn't likely to go as far as all that. Make up your mind to count three before you look up."

"Thanks," said Peter, meekly. There was no pride in Peter to be wounded. He knew the sort of player he was.

The couples were now moving off with smooth rapidity, and the course was dotted with the figures of players and their accompanying spectators. A fair proportion of these latter had decided to follow the fortunes of Raymond Gandle, but by far the larger number were sticking to Wallace, who right from the start showed that Gandle or anyone else would have to return a very fine card to beat him. He was out in forty-one, two above bogey, and with the assistance of a superb second, which landed the ball within a foot of the pin, got a three on the tenth, where a four is considered good. I mention this to show that by the time he arrived at the short lake-hole Wallace Chesney was at the top of his form. Not even the fact that he had been obliged to let the next couple through owing to Peter Willard losing his ball had been enough to upset him.

THE course has been rearranged since, but at that time the lake-hole, which is now the second, was the eleventh, and was generally looked on as the crucial hole in a medal round. Wallace no doubt realized this, but the knowledge did not seem to affect him. He lit his pipe with the utmost coolness; and, having replaced the match-box in his hip-pocket, stood smoking nonchalantly as he waited for the couple in front to get off the green.

They holed out eventually, and Wallace walked to the tee. As he did so, he was startled to receive a resounding smack.

"Sorry," said Peter Willard, apologetically. "Hope I didn't hurt you. A wasp."

And he pointed to the corpse, which was lying in a used-up attitude on the ground.

"Afraid it would sting you," said Peter.

"Oh, thanks," said Wallace.

He spoke a little stiffly, for Peter Willard had a large, hard, flat hand, the impact of which had shaken him up considerably. Also, there had been laughter in the crowd. He was fuming as he bent to address his ball, and his annoyance became acute when, just as he reached the top of his swing, Peter Willard suddenly spoke.

"Just a second, old man," said Peter.

Wallace spun round, outraged.

"What is it? I do wish you would wait till I've made my shot."

"Just as you like," said Peter, humbly.

"There is no greater crime that a man can commit on the links than to speak to a fellow when he's making his stroke."

"Of course, of course," acquiesced Peter, crushed.

Wallace turned to his ball once more. He was vaguely conscious of a discomfort to which he could not at the moment give a name. At first he thought that he was having a spasm of lumbago, and this surprised him, for he had never in his life been subject to even a suspicion of that malady. A moment later he realized that this diagnosis had been wrong.

"Good heavens!" he cried, leaping nimbly some two feet into the air. "I'm on fire!"

"Yes," said Peter, delighted at his ready grasp of the situation. "That's what I wanted to mention just now."

Wallace slapped vigorously at the seat of his Plus Fours.

"It must have been when I killed that wasp," said Peter, beginning to see clearly into the matter. "You had a match-box in your pocket."

Wallace was in no mood to stop and discuss first causes. He was springing up and down on his pyre, beating at the flames.

"Do you know what I should do if I were you?" said Peter Willard. "I should jump into the lake."

One of the cardinal rules of golf is that a player shall accept no advice from anyone but his own caddie; but the warmth about his lower limbs had now become so generous that Wallace was prepared to stretch a point. He took three rapid strides and entered the water with a splash.

The lake, though muddy, is not deep, and presently Wallace was to be observed standing up to his waist some few feet from the shore.

"That ought to have put it out," said Peter Willard. "It was a bit of luck that it happened at this hole." He stretched out a hand to the bather. "Catch hold, old man, and I'll pull you out."

"No!" said Wallace Chesney.

"Why not?"

"Never mind!" said Wallace, austerely. He bent as near to Peter as he was able.

"Good heavens!" he cried, leaping nimbly two feet into the air, "I'm on fire!"

"Send a caddie up to the club-house to fetch my grey flannel trousers from my locker," he whispered, tensely.

"Oh, ah!" said Peter.

It was some little time before Wallace, encircled by a group of male spectators, was

enabled to change his costume ; and during the interval he continued to stand waist-deep in the water, to the chagrin of various couples who came to the tee in the course of their round and complained with not a little bitterness that his presence there added a mental hazard to an already difficult hole. Eventually, however, he found himself back ashore, his ball before him, his mashie in his hand.

"Carry on," said Peter Willard, as the couple in front left the green. "All clear now."

Wallace Chesney addressed his ball. And, even as he did so, he was suddenly aware that an odd psychological change had taken place in himself. He was aware of a strange weakness. The charred remains of the Plus Fours were lying under an adjacent bush ; and, clad in the old grey flannels of his early golfing days, Wallace felt diffident, feeble, uncertain of himself. It was as though virtue had gone out of him, as if some indispensable adjunct to good play had been removed. His corrugated trouser-leg caught his eye as he waggled, and all at once he became acutely alive to the fact that many eyes were watching him. The audience seemed to press on him like a blanket. He felt as he had been wont to feel in the old days when he had had to drive off the first tee in front of a terrace-full of scoffing critics.

The next moment his ball had bounded weakly over the intervening patch of turf and was in the water.

"Hard luck!" said Peter Willard, ever a generous foe. And the words seemed to touch some almost atrophied chord in Wallace's breast. A sudden love for his species flooded over him. Dashed decent of Peter, he thought, to sympathize. Peter was a good chap. So were the spectators good chaps. So was everybody, even his caddie.

Peter Willard, as if resolved to make his sympathy practical, also rolled his ball into the lake.

"Hard luck!" said Wallace Chesney, and started as he said it ; for many weeks had passed since he had commiserated with an opponent. He felt a changed man. A better, sweeter, kindlier man. It was as if a curse had fallen from him.

He teed up another ball, and swung.

"Hard luck!" said Peter.

"Hard luck!" said Wallace, a moment later.

"Hard luck!" said Peter, a moment after that.

Wallace Chesney stood on the tee watching the spot in the water where his third ball had fallen. The crowd was now openly amused, and, as he listened to their happy laughter, it was borne in upon Wallace that he, too, was amused and happy. A weird, almost effervescent exhilaration filled him. He turned and beamed upon the spectators. He waved his mashie cheerily at them. This, he felt, was something like golf. This was golf as it should be—not the dull, mechanical thing which had bored him during all these past weeks of his perfection, but a gay, rollicking adventure. That was the soul of golf, the thing that made it the wonderful pursuit it was—that speculativeness, that not knowing where the dickens your ball was going when you hit it, that eternal hoping for the best, that never-failing chanciness. It is better to struggle hopefully than to arrive, and at last this great truth had come home to Wallace Chesney. He realized now why pro's were all grave, silent men who seemed to struggle manfully against some secret sorrow. It was because they were too darned good. Golf had no surprises for them, no gallant spirit of adventure.

"I'm going to get a ball over if I stay here all night," cried Wallace Chesney, gaily, and the crowd echoed his mirth. On the face of Charlotte Dix was the look of a mother whose prodigal son has rolled into the old home once more. She caught Wallace's eyes and gesticulated to him blithely.

"The cripple says he'll give you a stroke a hole, Wally!" she shouted.

"I'm ready for him!" bellowed Wallace.

"Hard *luck!*" said Peter Willard.

UNDER their bush the Plus Fours, charred and dripping, lurked unnoticed. But Wallace Chesney saw them. They caught his eye as he sliced his eleventh into the marshes on the right. It seemed to him that they looked sullen. Disappointed. Baffled.

Wallace Chesney was himself again.

Hunched on the bole of a felled fir, he stared down through the grey, sunless light.

After Dark

By

BERTRAM ATKEY

ILLUSTRATED BY HOWARD ELCOCK

I.

LATHAM drove his hard, calloused hands deep into the pockets of the worn blue cloth coat which he had picked up in some slop-shop at Southampton many hours before, and faced the north-easter hissing across the levels of rusty heather.

In spite of his sailor-like clothing it was easy to see that he had once been an Army man, though he had long ceased to be conscious of the jaunty carriage and good looks which, in the old days, had ever been among his chief concerns.

But now his concerns were more urgent and desperate. Few of the matters which had been of vital importance to Francis Malise Vane Brudenell Gard - Latham, lieutenant of Hussars, were of the least consequence to the roughly-dressed, hard-eyed deck-hand who, newly discharged from a San Francisco lumber ship, was now facing the frozen New Forest moorland stretching north-west to Salisbury Plain.

He talked to himself as he walked, in the manner of embittered and acrid men who have been much alone and have learned to seek solace in soliloquized recapitulations of old tragedies.

"She was a worthless woman," he said, aloud "For all her grace and beauty, her

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wonderful eyes, her magic hair, her perfect form, and her genius Loyse was utterly worthless—a coquette.

"She had promised me," said Latham, groping with half-frozen hands for a cigarette. He said it deep in his throat, almost growling—for now he had come to a countryside he knew, and old landmarks and familiar scenes were rising fast before him. And they revived old memories—edging them with an intangible pain.

"God, how young I was to fight for a woman like that—the trick of a coquette and a bottle of champagne, things of such little consequence as that."

He laughed—a tormented sound, instantly torn to shreds by the icy wind.

"A regiment of lovely women—all the champagne ever hoarded or wasted—it would take more than these to trick me into a folly like that again."

Striding steadily, mechanically, he concentrated again on that hour from the past. A man must think of something—and if, like Latham, he is returning after a lapse of bitter years to the scene of his tragedy, what will he think of but the tragedy itself?

At twenty he had loved Loyse Amyland and she had promised herself to him. And because of those matters, and for sake of a few flowers, he had shot Bramshaw.

The whole evil thing had leaped up like a flame.

Loyse had been a wonderful dancer—wonderful. Even now Latham nodded his head half-unconsciously.

IT had been at that fancy-dress affair of the Carlingfords that they had cleared the floor and asked Loyse to give them her rose dance—a pretty, graceful thing she had invented herself. There was nothing marvellous about it except that it was just pretty—and made her look very charming and desirable. The dance usually ended with Loyse, who had made great play with a little festoon or wreath of roses, throwing her wreath over the head of a man among the onlookers—presumably, if the general expression or implication of the dance meant anything at all, the dancer's lover. Then one laughed a little, applauded a great deal, and the thing was over—just five minutes' amusement for everyone, especially Loyse.

Only, on that night of nights, Loyse had deliberately passed him where he stood awaiting, and quite confident of receiving, the wreath, and thrown it over the sleek, shapely head of Lord Bramshaw!

One or two people—pals—had chaffed him instantly. Bramshaw had smiled his sardonic, hateful smile—and jealousy, the desperate jealousy of youth, and the champagne both had drunk, had done the rest. Five minutes later, at the extemporized buffet, Bramshaw had been witty at his expense—and he had been knocked down in return.

After that madness piled upon madness.

They had gone out and fought. Mainly because one of the little group of witnesses, all empty-headed, wine-lit boys like themselves, had insisted on a last drink before starting (more champagne with a dash of brandy in it), and partly because of Latham's notorious boxing superiority, they had strung themselves to the crazy point of—a duel.

Somebody had found a couple of revolvers in the gun-room, and they had gone down to the terrace above the little lake.

Latham's teeth gripped as the everlasting picture registered itself before his eyes again—Bramshaw in the scarlet coat and black knickerbockers of the Hunt Club evening dress, standing on the white, crackling, frosted grass, facing him—the distant-seeming, semi-maudlin laugh preceding the word "Fire!"; the two jets of pinkish flame; the snap of a bullet close by his head; and Bramshaw half-turning, crumpling, falling. White faces in the moonlight—whisperings—the wild electric thrill of relief when the old doctor, secretly and hastily fetched, said that the wounded man was not dead—and the black horror of next day when they arrested him at home, saying that Lord Bramshaw had died in the night without regaining consciousness.

After that the trial, and the judge, an old, tired man, speaking drearily:—

"Manslaughter—youth—folly—mutual madness—drink—passion—sad—sad—never in my experience—duty—sad—parents—stricken Earl—irreparable—penal servitude—seven years——"

And he had never seen or heard of or from Loyse Amyland from that day to this, save that she had been ill and that her people had taken her abroad. She had never written.

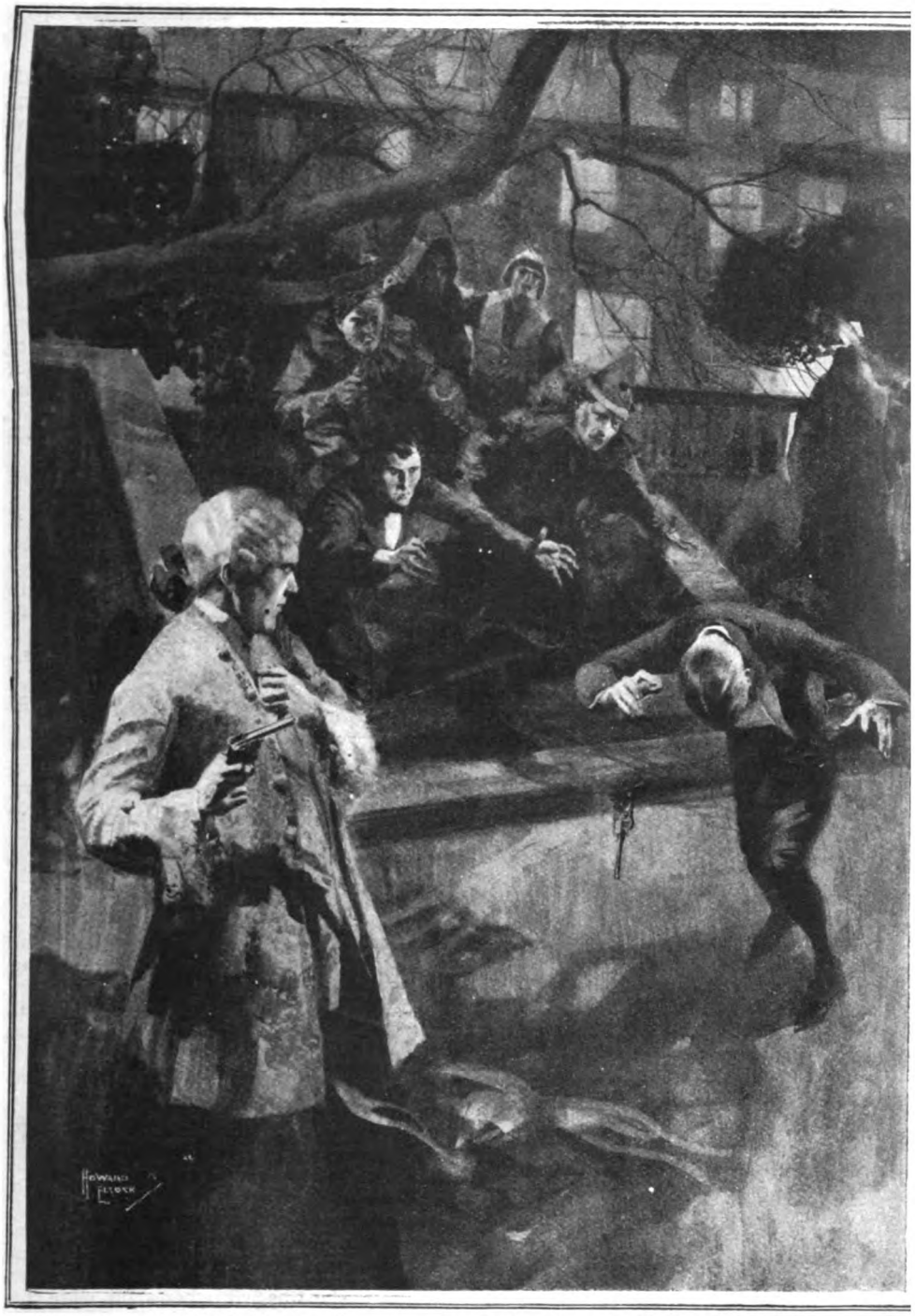
They had released him in about five years, but his parents had died long before he was free, and, for some reason never explained, nobody had met him outside the prison.

So he had gone straight to the coast and shipped out and away—out and away—anywhere, anywhere so that he put the sea between him and England.

Then had followed a few years of brutal struggle and blank failure in Canada and America—and now Latham had returned.

Once again, and wearily, his mind completed the old circle, and he punctuated all with a curse.

"Damn them all, what does it matter now?" said Latham. "It's their money I want now. Three thousand dollars and a ship that's bound for 'Frisco."



Two jets of pinkish flame; the snap of a bullet close by his head; and Bramshaw half-turning, crumpling, falling.

He beat his numbed hands against his breast as he drove on through the steel-hued twilight. He was nearing the village now, and his mind concentrated fiercely on the object of his journey.

Three thousand dollars.

That was what he had come home to England for.

There had been moments, at sea, when he feared that once ashore his spirit might melt or soften on this ancient soil of his homeland and his purpose weaken and die out. But now he knew, or believed he knew, that neither the English countryside nor the English people had power to soften him, or to awaken in his grim spirit any emotion but a sour dislike, a harsh and implacable disdain, that were too contemptuous to be hatred.

He had come from California, and he hoped soon to return to that sunny land, and there live out his life.

For this was not a visit—not even a farewell visit. It was a private raid.

" I want no gifts from this ' dear homeland,' " he had told himself, savagely, as he landed. " Nothing—except what I shall take."

He intended to steal three thousand dollars—something over seven hundred pounds—and to go back to California.

His plans were perfectly clear-cut.

There was a little farm, beautifully set on a sunny slope, easily worked, generously productive, waiting for him, being held for him. His friend, Hoyle, owner of the place, had definitely promised to wait for six months before selling—and he had that time in which to procure the purchase price of three thousand dollars. He had come to England to get this money—to steal it—for two reasons, the first being that he did not desire to settle down with the shadow of a crime committed in America and the risk of detection ever with him. The second arose from the fact that he was not a professional criminal and had no special knowledge which would render it easy for him to make a successful attempt in America. But in England there was a neighbourhood in which he knew by heart every big house within a radius of perhaps eight miles, for it was within this area that he had lived his boyhood.

It had come to him like an inspiration on the day he discussed the purchase of the coveted farm with Hoyle, and he had gone down to San Francisco forthwith.

AND now he halted at the brow of the steeply sloping, pine-topped ridge which overlooks the village of Broadlynch. Hunched on the bole of a felled fir, he stared contemplatively down through the grey, sunless light—precisely as some gaunt, hunger-driven, and dangerous carnivore of the frozen wild, wolf or panther, prowling in from some distant desolation, may squat to stare at the hamlet into which presently it will steal.

He saw that it had changed very little in the past ten years. With the exception of one big new house there seemed to have been no addition to the compact centre of the village, or to the residences scattered sparsely about the outskirts.

His eyes went blank and his lips tightened as his gaze almost involuntarily swung round to where, set in a ring of trees, the long, low Tudor house which was his birthplace, and had been for twenty years his home, made a warm patch against the grass of the park surrounding it. A fine old place—yes, one had to admit that—solid, warm, comfortable, a home. He had spent some glorious years in that old house. He saw that nothing—not one minute detail of its appearance—seemed to have changed.

Latham reined in his thoughts abruptly as it occurred to him that this was the sort of thing which made a man soft and sentimental and sapped his will. He would have to be careful of these reminiscences—they were the wrong kind. And, anyway, that old house had nothing more to do with him and his family or he with it or them.

Besides, there were other memories—less pleasant.

It was there—just by the big yew tree at the corner of the lawn—that he had been arrested. Yes, there—right in front of the open French window of the very room in which his mother was sitting at the very moment they took him into custody. No consideration—no tact—it seemed to him that even now, borne to him in the low, boding cadences of the east wind, he could hear her cry of horror, amazement, and pain as she realized what had happened.

Damn them all, couldn't they have had the decency to arrest him somewhere out of her sight and hearing?

His undying anger and hatred coiled again and quieted for a moment as his gaze moved back to the village—to the little square-towered church, and the pale specks that marked the graveyard. But for that cold-blooded blunder of the police she—the best, the dearest, the only woman in all the world worth while, and certainly the only one who ever understood him—would not be there now. It had killed her. If only she were alive now he would not have come home, prowling and stealthy, watchful and cunning—like this—but straight to her, wherever she was, with her arms wide, her eyes smiling in that old look of reproach made gentle by love.

He cursed the bitter wind that was bringing the tears to his eyes.

"It's worse than the wind in the North-West," said Latham, remembering incredible temperatures in Canada.

The light was fading swiftly now. Already it was gloomy under the pines, and grey shadows were stealing down upon the village. Tiny yellowish patches of light began to paint themselves on the dark shapes of the houses as lamps were lit. But one house—the big place which had been built since his day—remained lightless.

Latham noted that.

He moved forward down the hill, his face hard and resolute. He would have, he must have, three thousand dollars out of that village before ever he breasted the hill again. He swore it.

II.

LATHAM mentally rehearsed his careful plans as he went down the hill towards the village, sorting and resorting keen memories of the houses which he purported investigating first.

There was his old home; the Carlingfords' place; the Evernboroughs'; the Amylands'; and Round Hill House, which in the old days had been occupied by an enormously rich manufacturer from the North whose wife had possessed an array of diamonds that had extinguished even the family jewellery of the Countess of Ringwode, Bramshaw's mother. Ten minutes at Round Hill House (if he could find a few of the jewels and get away with them) would win him not a three thousand but a thirty thousand dollar farm in California.

His eyes glowed sombrely as he recalled the interior of Round Hill House—as familiar to him almost as his own home.

Then there was the Amylands' place. Old Sir John had been reputed very rich, and the Amyland jewellery, too, had been quietly famous.

Of course, all these people might have left the place, or died, or lost their money—but that was improbable.

It was a fair field for a bold, swift investigation.

He felt instinctively for the powerful electric torch in an inner pocket—and its grim accessories, the ugly, blued automatic, and the rubber-soled gymnasium shoes he had picked up at the port. They were safe enough.

Then there was that big new house on the far side of the village about midway between his old home and the Amylands' place.

He felt an odd inexplicable interest, a curiosity, in that house. From what cause this strange attraction arose he did not know. It was just an idea—a fancy. Perhaps it was because the house was of the compact, warm, dark-red brick type which he liked, or because it was built on a site which he always had said was a perfect site for just such a house.

It grew on him, this curious attraction, as he neared the little street of the village.

The blades of the east wind had driven indoors almost everybody who was not forced by his concerns to remain out, and he met few.

LATHAM cleared the village, hung for a fraction of a second at a fork of the road, glanced about him, then chose the road which would bring him past the new house to Round Hill House and the Amylands'.

"There's time and to spare," he said, "and this new place calls to me—somehow. I'll see why."

Daylight had yielded to moonlight by the time he reached the gates of its entrance-drive—neat, quiet, useful iron gates, set well back at the apex of the wide, easy curve with which the carriage-drive debouched on to the main road.

Latham nodded approval.

"Sensible entrance," he muttered. "A man could ride a young horse out of here without any fear of trouble with a passing motor. None of your blind right-angle 'concealed carriage-drive' insanity about this."

He opened the gate; it swung silently, well-balanced, with plenty of ground clearance, on well-oiled hinges.

"Properly looked after," said Latham, grudgingly. He stepped into the drive and, walking on the crisp turf border, followed its easy curve across a small, lightly-timbered park towards the house. A curious shadowy object stuck in the ground a little distance to the left caught his eye and he moved across to it.

It was an iron flag with the figure 7 painted on it—a golf-green flag.

"A private golf-course, hey?" said Latham, with an edge of sour envy in his voice, and moved on to the house.

In the moonlight he could see that it was set in well-planned gardens and grounds, facing a tennis-lawn, timbered on two sides, that gave on to a rose garden. Some distance off a row of greenhouses threw back a phantom glimmer at the moon, and a long, high wall hinted at a walled kitchen and fruit garden. Farther round was a little group of buildings that were evidently stables and garage.

"The man who planned this knew his job," muttered Latham.

He stared in the icy moonlight at the dark, lightless front of the house, hesitated a moment, then moved round towards the stable.

THE inexplicable fascination of this place was gripping him more and more tightly. His interest had been stirred on the distant hillside, but now it was more than stirred or awakened. It was vivid, vital, imperative—so much so that he did not pause to ask himself why this, more than any other of all the houses in England, attracted him.

He wanted to see all that was to be seen. Something, some secret but immensely powerful influence, drew him, like an unseen magnet.

Already there had formed in his mind a strange conviction, an impassive certainty, that here, at this place, at this house, he would secure what he was seeking. It was not a guess, a thought fathered by the wish; it was knowledge so calmly assured as to be wellnigh uncanny.

A vertical thread of light gleamed like an edging of gold down the blind of a cottage not far from the stables, and for an instant Latham halted, like a listening fox, rigid, to study it. Evidently the cottage was inhabited—probably by a groom. But that strange curiosity overcame his caution, and presently he stole on to the stable, silent as the shadow of a wolf gliding across the snow.

The stable door was not locked, and Latham entered, closing the door behind.

An uneasy snort told him that it was occupied even before he switched on his torch.

He swung his light on to the horses, examining them with the judging eye and the critical interest of a horseman.

"Ha! So Lucky Jim rides to hounds, does he, damn him?" said Latham. He meant the owner of this perfect little estate.

There were three horses, one a magnificent five-year-old red bay, obviously highly-bred, full of power and probably speedy, and a dark brown, as good as the bay.

"Two grand hunters—say two-fifty or three hundred guineas apiece, and a hack."

He patted the grey, neat, shapely hack—a mare of seven years old, her teeth told him—and stole out, carefully closing the door.

For a moment he stood in the shadow considering. From this point he could see the back of the house and he noted that it was unlighted.

He frowned a little, puzzled, for to his keyed-up and wary wits this was not normal. A house of this size required servants, but obviously there were neither servants nor employers in there now, unless they moved in darkness.

"Horses in the stable—an empty house—queer—unusual, anyway," he muttered. His eyes fell on the building next to the stable.

"Garage, evidently," he told himself "Well, let's see if the car is in! Maybe there's a festivity on somewhere."

He strode swiftly across and tried the door. This, too, was unlocked, and he opened it and slipped in.

His cautiously directed beam of light told him at once that the car was not out.

He examined it, that queer subtle envy in his heart raising its evil head ever higher.

"Lucky Jim" seemed to be very much the name for the owner of this place.

The car was a brand-new six-cylinder touring Winchester, wonderfully designed, beautifully built, and exquisitely finished a car of cars—an ideal thing—a magic carpet.

A man could send his horses to a hunt fifty miles away overnight and not need to rise in darkness next morning to be at the meet in ample time. Yes, a grand car. It contracted the boundaries of England so that one could select almost any distant spot on the map at breakfast-time and be at that place for dinner.

Then he remembered his purpose and left the garage.

Evidently the people of the house were not far away, or if they were they had not gone by motor.

He stole across to the lighted window of the cottage and listened.

There were men and women inside talking over a meal. He could hear the clatter of knives and forks, and occasionally caught a word, but not enough to understand what they were talking about.

Once, one of the voices rose slightly.

"Crazy, I tell you—mightn't think so—not for us to say—ha, ha—private opinion—expense—that's it—she's crazy—fanciful——"

The voice ceased. Latham waited a moment longer, then prowled across to the back of the big house. He found a door, tried the handle, and again, to his amazement, found it unlocked. He decided that the servants were gossiping in the groom's cottage, and very silently he entered and stood quite still for a long time listening.

It was warm in there after the remorseless wind outside—warm and silent.

He fancied he could smell a lingering odour of tobacco smoke, but it was so faint that it might have been his taut imagination.

Keeping his light low on the floor, he went slowly forward.

He passed through the back part of the house—kitchen, servants' hall, such places, all spotless, beautifully kept, admirably equipped. No fires were burning, but the genial warmth all about him bore witness to an elaborate system of central heating.

So, passing through double doors, he came to a part of the house which, he could have sensed in absolute darkness, was a place of sheer luxurious comfort. The soft, yielding carpets underfoot, the warm, clean air, told him that Lucky Jim's luck extended to the interior of the house.

The darting, ominous beam of light from his torch showed him enough, more than enough, to convince him that this was the home of a very wealthy man of good taste not ruined or vitiated by his obvious passion for sport—precisely and perfectly the house for which he, Latham, fresh from the forecastle of a lumber ship, and, before that, from a succession of the shacks, camps, and bunk-houses which constituted the changing homes of a wandering workman in Western America, would have gladly sold his soul.

He came presently, cautious and silent as a prowling cat, to a room which was evidently the owner's den—a glorious room fitted with bookshelves, gun cabinet, desk, racks for whips and rods, a big table, a sideboard, half-a-dozen big leather chairs, a couch—everything a man could desire. The masks of foxes, heads or antlers of deer, an array of weapons, and some fascinating oil paintings and old prints, almost all of sporting subjects or landscapes were on the dark glossy panelling of the walls.

"Every single, solitary thing a man can ask for!" muttered Latham. "This—all this! Does the luxurious devil ever realize that there are people out in the east wind, in the dark, in the forest—with the other animals?"

He moved across to the gun cabinet and looked long at the four guns it contained.

Then he went back to the desk and threw his light over it, choking down a sudden reluctance to continue which had stolen into his heart.

He tried the top drawer, but this was locked. The others were unlocked and empty, but freshly lined with white paper.

He ripped open the flap and drew out a packet of bank-notes.

He took out a short claw-ended steel bar and ruthlessly burst open the locked drawer.

It contained a thick envelope—nothing more.

He ripped open the flap and drew out a packet of bank-notes—nine notes of a hundred pounds each, one of fifty pounds, three of ten pounds, two of five pounds, and ten one-pound notes—in all a thousand pounds.

Latham stared, fascinated.

"This is uncanny! You'd think Lucky Jim knew I was coming to-night," he muttered.

But he hesitated at the almost eerie opportuneness of it for no more than a second. The Fates had led him to this.

It was the exact amount he needed, secured with a minimum of risk and trouble. His instinct had justified itself—and brought him fortune.

"A fickle jade—a fickle jade"—queer how that old *cliché* rang in his mind!

"She's turning at last—the little old wheel of fortune—good," he said, and put the envelope of notes carefully away in a flap pocket on the inside of the deep leather belt he wore.

"Here is where Lucky Jim is unlucky for once," he said, his eyes glowing, and turned to go. "But if he can't spare it no man can."

His mouth was dry from excitement, and he stopped, turning to the sideboard. But he drew back in a sudden spurt of caution.

"No. No drinks till I'm clear of this place, and this country," he said. "It's coming too pat—I don't like it. It's uncanny. There's a string tied to luck like this—a trap."

He crammed a box of cigars into his pocket and moved swiftly to the door.

"The sooner I get out of this the better," he muttered, uneasily.

But nothing happened. No concealed mystery or trap barred his exit. He gained the door by which he had entered, circled round to the front of the house, and went swiftly down the drive across the park, through the iron gates, and so on to the high road.

He did not hesitate in his choice of route, but turned sharply into the teeth of the east wind and headed for a by-road which would bring him out into the main road back to the seaport.

"It was ordained," he said, and went forward. "No burglar had luck like that before."

But there was neither exultation nor even contentment in his voice. Two hours before he would have been satisfied beyond measure with a thousand pounds. But now he seemed to have lost perspective.

What was a thousand pounds, anyway? That man he called Lucky Jim, whoever he was, would hardly miss it. He had everything—a perfect house, a fine car, splendid horses, hunting, shooting, fishing, golf, friends, probably a beautiful wife (that sort of man usually had), health, reputation, and money in plenty. His tastes were exactly those of Latham, and his possessions were entirely the kind which he, Latham, appreciated above all possessions.

Yes, Lucky Jim could spare what he had lost to him—a lonely wolf prowling in out of the bitter night to snatch whatever he could, and now, with his plunder, retreating again into the night. It meant everything to him—and nothing to Lucky Jim, damn him!

III.

FOR a quarter of a mile Latham went swiftly through the moonlight, without meeting a soul.

Then, as he approached the entrance-gates of a drive leading up to a big house some distance back from the road, he heard voices, and slowed down for a moment.

He backed into the deep shadows of a high hedge and listened.

The figures ahead appeared to be those of two country lads, and they were wrangling in their soft dialect—one urging the other to "come on home."

"What do 'ee want to go a-peepin' and pryin' in there for? Come on home to your tea, I tell 'ee. Leave her alone to do as she's a mind to. Tidn't no harm to nobody, is it, then? Come on home—I be nigh shrammed wi' cold—so be you. Let her abide. For all her money, she ain't right in her mind, poor soul, everybody knows. Let her do as she's a mind to, then—and come on home, will 'ee?"

Reluctantly the lesser figure joined the speaker, and they came away, trudging past Latham in the shadows, wholly unconscious of his presence.

But Latham did not hasten to continue his flight. He was considering one or two of the things which the country boy had said.

"Let her abide—for all her money she ain't right in her mind, poor soul."

What did that mean—and to whom did it refer?

Latham peered down the drive beyond the gates.

Many and many a time had he passed down that drive in the old glorious days—for it led to the house of the Amylands.

"Leave her alone to do as she's a mind to. Tidn't no harm to nobody."

Who was it that was not right in her mind, poor soul, and did no harm to anybody?

He recalled the words he had overheard outside the groom's cottage.

"Crazy—she's crazy—fanciful."

He found himself fighting down a ridiculous desire to steal along the drive and find out whom the boys had been speaking of.

"What good?" he muttered. "Get back to the coast, you fool, while you're safe."

But that sudden impulse, the most peremptory of all on this strange evening of impulses, was not to be denied.

One needed not to be a professional criminal trained and deft and cunning at his sinister craft to know that this was indeed an act of folly—to linger in this neighbourhood with the proceeds of a robbery which might at any instant be discovered hidden on one's person.

Latham knew it, knew that if he yielded to this sudden urge of curiosity—or was it a far deeper, profounder emotion?—he increased incredibly the risk of sacrificing the easy and triumphant success of his long expedition and of putting himself in even greater danger of returning to the dark life of penal servitude which had destroyed for ever his youth.

Yet—he yielded instantly, cursing himself as he yielded.

"Like a bit of steel to a magnet!" he muttered resentfully, as he passed silently through the gates. "Why? After this, don't tell me a man is always responsible for his acts! I ought to be heading away—out of it!"

But, like a hawk to its lure, he went—drawn or driven, he hardly knew. His mind was vaguely thronging with old memories. Here so often in the past he had lingered with Loyse—walked with her, hand in hand—swinging hands like children, perhaps, or holding close—laughing, whispering, once she had been crying—he had forgotten why—some little thing—and he had comforted her. Ah, but she had been lovely.

Stealing, on soft soles, through the moonlight, he recalled that with a pang that was painful rather than angry. She had treated him woefully, unspeakably—but he did not deny that for him she had always been utterly lovely.

AND now he guessed, or believed he guessed, the source of his determination to adventure down the drive. It was because of a wild hope that he might see her—catch a glimpse of her once more, for the last time.

He hoped she was here to-night—for if she were not, then he did not know where else to go to find her.

If he did not see her to-night—for the last time—then he would never see her again—as long as he lived.

It was a craving with him now—as though a little dull ember, a tiny sombre fire in his deep heart, which had remained latent all these years, had suddenly burst into flame.

There thrilled within him, too, a vibrant belief that he would see her—that she was here—in this house.

No doubt she had married someone years ago, some level-headed man not given to wine or to fantastic fighting, and if, peering in, he caught a glimpse of her, it might be that he would see her playing with her children—before they went to bed—it would be about the time children went to bed, wouldn't it? He jerked his head sharply. What did *he* know about children, anyway? asked an icy sardonic voice in his brain—as it might be the very breath of the east wind stabbing down the drive.

To see her playing with her children, in a warm, lighted room with toys all over the floor—little red-painted cart-things and kind of horses and toy trains and dolls—everybody laughing.

Yes, he would be all the happier if he could see that—just have a look—and then beat it, get out of it, as silently as he had come. After all, hadn't he a thousand in his belt, and a home of his own waiting for him? Might have a wife and—yes, children of his own some day. She wouldn't, she couldn't, be as exquisite as Loyse—but he wouldn't grumble at that. A thief, a tramp, a hobo—he wouldn't expect that. He'd thrown his chance of that away years ago—still, a wife, and children with toys—toys!

He came out of the shadows, stepped on to the lawn before the house, and stared, astonished at the change there.

The place was so densely overgrown with ivy that it looked almost a ruin, shapeless. And all its windows fronting the lawn were lightless, save for the spectral gleam with which, here and there, one shone in the moonlight.

For a moment he stood, breathless, in the freezing air, gazing up. Never had it looked like this, never could he have imagined it like this in the old golden days. Then it had been warm, a glowing house, with bright windows, facing shaven lawns and a great blaze of flowers. Now it was like a ruin—dark, sombre, overgrown. Even in that light he could see that the garden and the lawn were a wilderness.

He caught his breath, his pleasant, human vision of playing children gone in an instant.

No laughing children played in that house.

A place of bitter ivy, melancholy, and a haunt of owls and rustling furtive things, like a dark and empty church looming above a weed-choked churchyard—Loyse, whose bright, beautiful hair and wide, shining eyes had ever illumined the darkest corridor of the house, could never have endured this sombre abode.

"Empty—they've all gone," muttered Latham, with a curious, wild tone of disappointment and despair in his voice. "Years ago."

He laughed harshly—but he could have wept—as he relinquished his vision of happiness.

Then the words of the boy at the gate came back to him and he realized anew that there was somebody in that house—that poor soul who "did no harm to anybody" because "she was not right in her mind."

Latham moved silently round to the side of the house which faced the park, and his heart leaped as he saw that from the big French windows overlooking the long, pleasant slope down to the lake there shone a bright light.

"Somebody in the drawing-room," he muttered, and drew close. Hanging growths of ivy screened a full half of the windows, but they served partly to screen him, too, as he peered in.

The room was empty of all furniture—except for a white pedestal, its base half concealed by a heap of flowers, standing on a rich rug at the end farthest from the window. This pedestal bore a white marble bust—though it was too far off for Latham to identify it. But as he strove to distinguish the features of this, the only object visible to him, the figure of a woman came swaying lightly out from one side of the room, moving with a floating grace that was incomparable. In her hands she carried a wreath of roses, and her dress was white, long-skirted, and oddly old-fashioned.

BUT it was not the sight of the flowers nor the dress of this white, silent lady which suddenly stilled the very heart-beats of the watcher; nor the faded gold of her hair, nor the beauty of the profile which at moments he saw distinctly, nor even the graceful steps of the dance before the marble bust—it was the thin, almost wasted, arms which showed so plainly in the strong light of the room as she raised the roses above her head.

For this lady, dancing silently, like a little, lone, lovely ghost, in this lonely house, was Loyse—Loyse! Dressed exactly as she had been dressed on the fatal night of that mad "duel," dancing the same simple dance—though now with the practised grace and unconscious ease of a gliding bird—bearing a wreath of roses, even as she had dressed and danced so long ago.

But then her bare arms had been so beautiful, so faultlessly moulded, so warmly curving. Now they were thin—fragile—almost like those of one who has starved.

His heart cried out over her.

Faintly, so faintly that it might almost have been a trick of his fancy, he heard the ghostly tap of the high heels on the shining floor; and it seemed, too, that his senses caught a remote fragrance of roses.

But surely this was fancy—a vision—a pale dream?

Latham's hands were clenched as he glared round to reassure himself that he was not in some strange region of fantasy. But the park stretched before him, dotted with great dark trees that swayed in the wind, the ivy rustled about him, and the frozen moon hung familiar and changeless in the blue-black skies. It was real—real.

And Loyse danced silently before the pedestal.

What did it mean?

A shivering fit seized upon the watcher as he stared, and it seemed that a strange keenness of vision came to him in the sudden mood of exultation, yearning, pity, of many emotions, which possessed him. And he saw that Loyse was changed. Pale she was, pale and thin, and the gold had gone from her hair. She was still beautiful in a frail and delicate way—but it was not the beauty of the Loyse of old time.

And there was that about the dance which suggested infinite sadness.

It was this, then, that those rustics had meant—which one of them had wished to see. And Loyse must be the poor soul who "did no harm" because "she was not right in her mind." Loyse!

A sudden wave of love and pity overwhelmed his spirit, and he lifted his hand to the latch of the French window—even as the dance finished.

He checked himself to see. She swayed up to the pedestal, and with a gesture of extraordinary tenderness dropped the wreath on to the marble shoulders of the bust, paused for a moment, her arms wide in a pose of adoration, then seemed to collapse, burying her face among the flowers, lying like one dead or unconscious at the foot of the pedestal, a few petals of the roses fluttering down upon her faded hair as she lay there.

She did not hear, or, if she heard, ignored, the click of the latch of the window, as Latham swung it open. Inside the room he could see and hear that she was not unconscious—but weeping—crying as he had never before heard a woman cry.

His rubber-soled shoes made no sound as he came swiftly to her. His eyes were like bright steel as, staring at the bust, he recognized it—and, recognizing it, understood.

It was a replica of his own head and shoulders.

YEARS ago she had placed her roses on the shoulders of Viscount Bramshaw—but she never meant it, it had been no more than a flicker of mischief, a girl's sudden impulse of coquetry, regretted well-nigh before it was done—but Bramshaw had been killed because of it, and the heart of Latham's mother had been broken because of it, and Latham had suffered and sunk low because of it, and she, Loyse, had starved for love because of it.

Latham dropped on his knees by her side—he saw that all the flowers were withered

roses fallen from the bust, and left where they fell—and spoke in a low voice of anguish :—

" Loyse ! "

It was no more than a trembling whisper —but she heard.

She raised herself, her eyes wide, staring, incredulous. On their knees they faced each other.

" *Frank !* "

Her lips shaped the word rather than said it.

Slowly she raised a thin white hand to touch his, then it stole up to press with light finger-tips his cheek, and the wonder in her eyes grew.

Once she looked up at the marble bust, then back again.

" It *is* Frank ! " she cried, suddenly, in a clear, oddly tenuous voice, and lifted her arms.

" Oh, Loyse—I never knew——" he began.

Two thin arms went round his neck, holding him tightly, with a curious, feeble tightness, and her head fell forward to his shoulder.

" You are crying, too, Frank—oh, don't ! " she said, slowly. Her voice trailed off in a long, long sigh, and she was still.

Terror-stricken, he stared at the pale, delicate face.

But almost at once he saw that she was breathing, and even as he did so the door opened and a woman came in—a pleasant-faced, middle-aged woman, very quietly dressed.

She started a little, but did not hesitate. She came to them, glanced keenly at Latham, then to the bust, and back again, nodding.

" You are Frank Latham ? " she asked, in a low voice, studiously composed. " Yes —I see it."

Her dark eyes dimmed suddenly.

" Oh, I always knew that this would happen ! " she cried, her voice breaking. " I knew that God would not punish her for that little thing all her life long."

She knelt beside them, controlling herself.

" She has fainted. Let me have her. There is wine on the table in the next room. Will you bring it ? It is often like this when she dances—and she has danced here—like this—for you—hundreds—hundreds—of times."

Latham made haste to do her bidding.

His hands were trembling as he poured the wine.

" Will this—will she—the shock——" he stammered.

But Loyse's friend only smiled—a deep, wise smile.

" This is not the kind of shock that harms. It heals broken hearts," she said, adding, with a strange smile, " and dispels mists that hang about minds saddened past bearing. Ah, dearest one—drink—a little more—once more—ah, brave, good little Loyse—bring the wrap—the shawl—from the couch in the next room, Mr. Latham—yes, yes, my dearest, I know, it is cold, cold. Look, then, here is your shawl—and someone to carry you into the next room—*Frank !* Take her, Mr. Latham ! "

He carried her, light as a child, into the warm room adjoining, and set her down in a big chair by the glowing fire.

She was smiling, and a little touch of colour was stealing into her cheeks.

" I knew that some day you would come," she said. " If only I waited patiently. Won't you give me a kiss, please, Frank—after all these years ? "

But he caught her hand and held it tight.

" When I have told you the kind of man I am," he muttered. " A thief—a wolf out of the dark——! "

" Tell me, then, Frank—if you wish. But it will not matter."

He was brief. He was able to be brief, for, until this night, he had nothing worse than failure to confess, and this was not a moment to weigh failure or success.

It was the crime in intent and deed he had committed that night which in his present mood he must confess.

She listened silently, like one spellbound ; and at the end of the muttered confession she drew a deep breath.

" Anne ! Anne ! " she cried. " Did you hear ? "

Her friend, who had entered quietly while Latham was speaking, nodded, smiling.

They were both smiling.

Latham's heart fell, and an icy disappointment seized him. To laugh——

She saw his face, and her smile died out.

" Oh, I did not mean to hurt you," she cried, penitent. " Only—only—you have not been a thief—you have stolen nothing——"

" But, Loyse "—he fumbled at his waist a second and drew out the bank-notes he had taken—" here is the money——"

" Oh, yes—but it is yours—your own—it was meant for you—all—all in that house—the house itself—everything there—is yours. I have built it up—for years—for you——"

She stood up suddenly, her face flushing, her eyes shining.

" Frank ! It was your own house. I built it for you. It has been ready for you for years. When you went away I was ill—in my body and my mind—people said I was mad—yes, Anne, I knew—I have known all the time—and perhaps I was. But not now. When they released you I was ill—and you disappeared. Nobody knew where you had gone. But I knew you would come back

some day—when you were not bitter any longer. Even if I were mad, I knew that. And I made a house ready for you. I bought the land where you always used to say a house should be built—didn't you?"

"Yes."

"And I remembered just the very kind of house you liked. I tried to remember everything you had ever said—ever liked. Did you like the house, Frank?"

"Yes, Loyse."

"Ah! and the lake. And the little golf links! Did you see them?"

"Yes, oh, yes, Loyse!"

"For you. I remembered how you loved to fish—and to play golf. Did you see the horses, Frank? They have been waiting a year for you. Were they nice?"

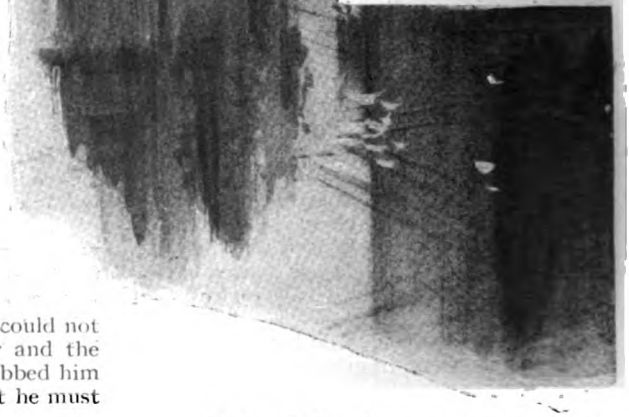
"Oh, they were perfect!" It was wringing his heart, he felt he could not endure this, but he saw the glory and the joy in her eyes, and though she stabbed him unconsciously with every word, yet he must listen.

"And there is a car for you to go to the meet in. I chose it, and it has always been ready—at any time."

"A wonderful car!" he said, his voice trembling.

"Did you see the cigars—they were Larranagas—the kind you liked. And your favourite things to drink! And the guns—Frank, I found your *own* old gun. It's there—everything I could think of is there for you. Your golf clubs, too. Did you go upstairs? There are clothes—silk things—and lovely ties—the kind you used to wear. I said, 'I will forget nothing—and it shall *all* be ready for him—everything he likes—to walk into at any moment—the money, too, just to go on with.' There are servants ready to come in at once—and everything, Frank. Oh, I have thought and planned, and it has been a joy and an anguish to me. To make up to you—just to make up to you a little—as well as I could—for what you have suffered because of me—because of my folly." Her fragile fingers tightened on his hands.

"They said that I was mad, out of my mind, to do that—to buy things I did not use, pay servants who did not work. But



Latham's hands were clenched as he tenderness, dropped

they did not understand. You have done no harm, Frank—that money—all—everything was your own—your very own—to

try to make up to you for what I did. Frank, I did not *mean* to give the roses to Lord Bramshaw—it was just something—a fancy that came to me. To see you look cross—to tease you. I was sorry at once. I can't think why I did it—only I have suffered for it, too. We have both suffered so. I have prayed for you. And I have tried to wipe it out of my mind. I have danced for you thousands of times since then—and always, always, my roses have been for you. Perhaps they were right when they said I was mad, but I know that it was unhappiness, too."

Her voice faltered—broke. Across the room, Anne, her friend, was crying openly.

"If only you would forgive me, please.

watched. Loyse swayed up to the pedestal and, with a gesture of extraordinary the wreath on to the marble shoulders of the bust.

"Oh, no more, for God's sake, Loyse, dear little Loyse, no more—I can't endure——"

Blindly, Latham reached out his arms—and with a little cry of mingled joy, gratitude, tenderness, and great love she came to him at last.

Billy Bones

by

A. CONAN DOYLE

ILLUSTRATED BY TOM PEDDIE

DADDY was a heavy sort of person as a rule, with his mind wandering away upon things that don't matter, and writing them down upon bits of paper. But when he was in the mood he could make up some very decent games, and perhaps some other daddies would like to know about them, even if the poor mumties have to do a bit of cleaning-up afterwards. Let us see how a game was worked. Cunning Daddy had prepared it all—you must take a little trouble if you want a thing to be worth doing—but he had said nothing to anyone about it.

It was Christmas Day and a clear, crisp afternoon. 'I am so glad Christ has a fine day for His birthday!" said baby, whom we shall have to call Billie, for she would answer to no other name.

"Yes," said Dimples, 'I hope He will have many happy returns."

"How proud God must be of Him!" remarked Laddie.

Daddy has allowed them all to find their own relations with the Creator, and their loving little brains have conceived some very human and happy ones. Perhaps they would have been even more unusual if the Lady had not wisely intervened. But as it is there is something wonderful in their trust. God, darling," is the beginning of their prayers. Christ they look upon as a glorious elder brother who can do anything, and do it better than anyone else. The remorseless logic of their clean-cut minds produced dreadful dilemmas for Mumty, for she is less agile in hopping out of corners than Daddy, who is capable of cutting an argument short with a sofa cushion.

Mumty, darling, do you think there is cricket in the children's heaven?"

'I am sure, dear, that there is everything which would make little boys and girls happy."

Three serious child-faces grow grave over this answer and all that it involved.

"Well, then," said Laddie at last, "in that case, of course there is cricket."

Mumty did not dispute it, so the case went by default. But the consequences must follow.

"Very well, then, when they have cricket, would Christ play?"

Mumty wriggled violently, but thought that she saw a way to safety.

"Well, my darling, if it would make the children happier, Christ would do anything."

"That means He would play if He was wanted," said Laddie.

"He would play if they were one short," said Dimples.

"I think, dearies, you had better go out and play on the lawn," cried the harassed Lady.

"I expect He would be jolly useful," said Laddie, with intense earnestness.

"Perhaps He can bowl googlies," said Dimples.

Daddy, who had been grinning at the Lady round the corner of his paper, thought it was time to intervene.

"Well, dear, it's better than fear, is it not?" said he; and then: "I say, what about a game of Billy Bones?"

There was a rapturous acquiescence and a general clapping of hands. In a few minutes the neighbours' boys had assembled: little Cousin John, who is eight, the same age as Billie, and Frank, his younger brother. John is engaged to Billie, and warned Frank that he must give up kissing her. "Yes, I will kiss her," said little Frank. "Then I hope you'll get a cold, and then you won't be allowed," said John. John and Billie had been out all the morning looking for a house. But their romance is another

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story, so we will get back to the point that they and a dozen others had assembled.

Daddy sat on the edge of the table and looked down at all the earnest little faces. One wants to be earnest also if one is to play a good boys' game. It was a very serious council

"Look here," said Daddy, wagging his pipe in an impressive manner "No one must come into this who does not know what he is doing. You all understand, I hope, that it is a pretty dangerous business."

The older ones looked elated and the younger awestruck.

"There is still time," said Daddy, looking more and more portentous, "to get out of it. We may scrape through, but we take a risk."

They were all ready, though one little fellow seemed inclined to whimper, and was called a "funk" by his brother.

"Well, then," said Daddy, "you know, of course, what the business is. It's that horrible fellow, the one-legged pirate, Billy Bones." Shade of Stevenson, forgive the two-legged pirate who writes this!

"Whatever has he done?" asked Cousin John.

"Ah! What hasn't he done? The less said about it the better."

"Was it very awful?" asked Dimples.

"No, no, dear," said Mumty.

All the faces fell.

"So awful Mumty tries to hide it. Now, the point is that the fellow has been seen round here, and can easily be traced by the mark of his wooden leg. We'll either get him or he'll get us. If we can't find him, we'll find his treasure, anyhow. Are you ready?"

A general buzz.

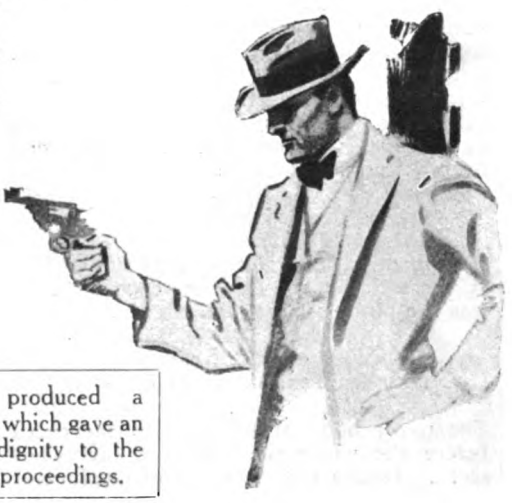
"Have you all sticks or weapons?"

Yes, they all had sticks. Daddy produced a revolver from his side-pocket, which gave an austere dignity to the whole proceedings.

"If we start we must see it through," said Daddy. "There is still time for anyone to back out."

"Is it a job for girls?" asked Dimples, with his eyes on Billie; and then gave a loud howl as his sister's stick came across his shins.

"No ragging. This is serious. Just one thing before we start. If, as we go, you come suddenly on a tall dark man with a squint and a long cloak, get on to him at once. Don't wait for him to draw. That's Jack Gilmore." Here Daddy disgraced himself by breaking into laughter—a really inexcusable thing in a pirate hunt. It had suddenly occurred to him how funny it would be if they really did happen to meet some inoffensive gentleman who answered to the description, and if the whole swarm settled upon him. "It's all right, my lads," said Daddy. "I am only laughing to think of Billy's face when he comes back for his treasure and finds that it is gone. Now, then, all line up on the doormat of the garden door. Are you all there? Well, then, here is the first clue."



Daddy produced a revolver, which gave an austere dignity to the whole proceedings.

He drew a slip of paper from his pocket with an impressive skull and cross-bones upon it. Beneath was written :—

TEN TO EAST AND TEN TO WEST,
FIND THE MURDERED PEDLAR'S VEST.

"That's west," said Daddy, pointing straight out from the open door.

The gang drew together and consulted, while Daddy lit his pipe and awaited developments.

"Ten what?" asked one.

"Well, it's always yards in the books," said Laddie.

"Paces," said Dimples.

"Well, then, ten paces to west and then ten to east."

"That brings us back here."

"It must surely be a mistake."

"Perhaps it *is* here," said a small quiet boy named Brodie.

They all looked suspiciously at the mat. Yes, there was a bulging there against the wall. In an instant they had it up, and there was the vest with a carving knife right through the middle of it, and half a bottle of red ink over the lining. The Lady was shocked by realistic details, but Daddy, of coarser fibre, was quite uncompromising in getting his atmosphere. They all stood hushed and awed in the presence of this gruesome relic.

"Perhaps there's a clue in it."

"Yes, yes, here it is."

A bit of paper projected from the pocket. It was torn out and eagerly opened. On it was the pirate symbol and the words :—

HURRY! HURRY! DO NOT TARRY!
FIND THE FLAGON IN THE QUARRY!

The paper had not fluttered to the earth before the whole pack was off on a hot scent. Daddy and two or three volunteer whippers-in came lumbering behind. There was only the one quarry, so the hounds streamed in and out of the furze bushes, shot across the common, and poured down into the hollow, where the high carved wall of Ashdown sandstone faced them, with alternate lines of stone and of rubble which seemed to show the rhythmic movement of the ages. There was a corner there with a huge prehistoric footmark stamped deep within it, three-toed and enormous. That is a long way from Billy Bones, but it was strange to Daddy, as he leaned upon his stick, to watch these little human bubbles, blown yesterday and bursting to-morrow, with the old, old stage as their background and the very footprint of a veteran in the piece still stamped upon it.

They nosed about and whimpered and grouped and broke, like a dozen young puppies. Then there was a cry, and Laddie's slim, active figure was seen tearing up a slope and balancing on a ledge. There, forty feet above the ground, was Daddy's copper shaving jug, gleaming coldly in the thin winter sunshine. Very absurd it looked stuck in a corner of the rock. It meant a climb and a long reach, but Laddie has no fear of heights, and a minute later the pot was on the ground with a ring of eager faces round it. The paper within it was plucked out and eagerly examined.

FOURTH GREEN—EASTERN EDGE,
A BIRD IS SITTING IN THE HEDGE;
SEARCH FORWARD—SEARCH BACK—
THERE IS WICKED BILLY'S TRACK.

THE pack was in full cry once more, down the steep spoilbank on the far side of the quarry, in and out of the gorse clumps, and parallel to the golf course, until they came to the fourth green, where they ran up and down the adjacent hedge. There was an absurd-looking bird, which usually mounted guard over an ash-tray in the study, sticking its red beak out of a thorn bush. No inscription was needed this time, and the pack simply scattered and hunted for tracks. One little boy came to Daddy with a teaser.

"Please, sir, when Billy Bones runs away and hides a treasure, why does he leave clues behind him to show where he has gone?"

Daddy made a fine effort.

"I don't tell everyone," said he, "but between you and me, Billy's Negro wife has quarrelled with her husband and hates him. She leaves the traces behind in order to spite him."

More awkward questions might have come, but a clear call of triumph showed that Billie and John, who, as an affianced pair, ran in couples, had struck the trail. From now onwards the wicked negress had left little balls of paper to mark her husband's flight. Nose down and tail up the pack were on his heels—down a long slope, over a gate, along the edge of a field, and then——!

It was a truly fearsome place, and would have balked a good many grown-ups. There was a deeply-worn tangled valley upon the right with a stream at the bottom. A narrow gorge ran down to it, and it was this which cut across the path of the children. They halted at the edge and peered down into the depths, a good twenty-five-foot drop with a wall of slippery clay, not very far from the perpendicular. Could it really be the trail? Yes, there was a ball of paper caught among the bramble bushes down at the bottom. One by one, seated

on the ground, they slithered down into the depths. John came last with the crook of his stick in the belt which circled Billie's little waist. Then someone slipped, and in a moment what had been a perpendicular line of children had changed to a tumbled heap of humanity at the bottom of the descent. But they were up in a moment and flowed down among the thorn bushes and over the boulders till they had followed the side gorge down to the stream and were racing down the bush-grown valley. Cowardly Daddy had slipped round an easier way, for he is not built to be shot down small precipices — and, besides, he had laid the trail in the morning.

Billy Bones had run down the bed of the stream among all sorts of interlacing branches and thickets of undergrowth. Then, like the villain he was, he had gone right up the steep clay bank again, seventy feet high by now, but with a better slope and occasional tufts of grass. It was a hard clamber, and there was many a slip and many a rescue, but stained with mire and breathing hard the whole pack reached the top, and strained on the leash while Daddy shouted to them from below to hold hard until every straggler had come in. Then off again along the edge of fields with the steep valley always on the right. A grim place, that valley, with the name "Slaughter Glen" and a legend of foul work done among crouching fugitives in the wars of the Danes. That little stream had run blood once and Red Bridge spanned it lower down, so full of meaning are the old Shire names.

Then someone slipped, and what had been a perpendicular line of children changed to a tumbled heap of humanity at the bottom of the descent.

But the little rosy-faced boys and girls of good King George's reign knew and cared little for the dark old shadows down yonder in the valley. For half a mile they raced in and out among the hazels which border the slope. Then suddenly the track dipped down, and it was slip and slide and squatter and scramble until they were down once more in the bed of the stream which runs brown and rich with the Sussex iron. Now the directions were up stream, and all the mumties would have thrown up their hands could they have seen them stumbling over greasy boulders, and plodding ankle-deep through pools as they traced Billy to his lair. There were perilous passages and moments of dread when they came to deep places and had to make their way round one by one, their toes in crevices of the rocks and their hands clinging to drooping branches, while Daddy shepherded them with a strong stick and a watchful eye. Graceful silver birches and tall slimy beech stems rose from the very lips of the stream, and their bare interlacing branches formed a continuous tunnel overhead. Keen young eyes darted in every direction for the treasure which at any moment might lie before them. Once a bottle was found in the stream.

"It's him!" cried Daddy. "It's his rum bottle! We're near him now. On, boys, on!"

But now they came on a curve of the valley and there before them was a perfect waterfall. The ledge of rock, green and

slithery, reared itself up for ten or twelve feet, and the water covered it save for a streak on one side where a treacherous foothold could be found. This was the climax of the hunt. At the top was Billy Bones's lair. "Silence here, or the fellow may deal with us one by one!" With a fearful joy the children felt that all domestic laws had gone to the winds as the cold stream flowed down their sleeves and over their grasping hands. It was hard work, but there was not one who failed to reach the summit. There they had been ordered to halt until Daddy joined them. No one must speak above a whisper.

"It's just round the corner!" said Daddy, drawing his revolver. "Now, boys!" with a shout, "all together and down with the villain for ever!"

A few knew that it was a game. A few were in doubt. Quite half had taken every step of the way with all seriousness, thanks to the careful detail. It was in a real Victoria Cross spirit that they charged forward with a cheer and threw themselves into the rascal's den. It was a quiet rock-girt pool with a small cavern at the side. No sign of Billy, but a cry of delight went up all the same, for there was the treasure all right. A brass-bound box lay among the rocks, with an inscription in paper upon the lid and a huge wax seal.

BILLY BONES HIS TREASURE
From the Cocos Islands.
Value
240,000 Gold Dollars.
X Billy his mark.

"Billy Bones has gone," cried several treble voices, while the uplifted clubs were lowered.

"The better for him!" said Daddy, grimly, as he pocketed his revolver. "No, we won't open the treasure here. The diamonds might get loose. Wait till we are safe at home and then we'll see what we have got."

"Now, boys," said Daddy, drawing his revolver, "all together and down with the villain for ever!"

"This is probably the greatest uncut emerald in the world."
"Oo!" said all the children, gazing with round eyes.

Keeping in a solid clump, so as to form a treasure guard, the hunters made for home. There was still the atmosphere of danger. It is part of the game to work all chance events into it, so that when the three shots of some pheasant-shooters rang out as they cleared the valley, Daddy yelled out that it was the pirate's alarm and that they were pursued. Many a backward glance was cast as they hurried over the moor.

It was an eager group which leaned over the box as Daddy cut the strings with a knife. "Of course, the pirates always put horrible things over their treasure. Don't be alarmed, but be ready for anything! Sometimes it was a bit of the slave who dug the hole, sometimes a poisoned dagger, sometimes merely a viper!" With an eldritch screech he threw open the lid and there was a considerable widening of the circle. But they closed in again when nothing happened, and listened with shining eyes to Daddy's brazen account of the contents.

"These are only diamonds," said Daddy, shaking a small bag of pebbles. "I don't suppose you would get ten thousand pounds for the lot. But this is good——" It was an ugly lump of malachite from his geological case. "This is probably the greatest uncut emerald in the world."

"Oo!" said all the children, gazing with round eyes.

"Yes, they bid up to a hundred thousand in Paris but it was withdrawn. That's the Corona Corona emerald. Here are the two famous beryls from the Sultan of Travancore's turban. They are linked together with gold, for fear they should get separated." It was a very common sleeve link, but it passed all right. "All these things that look like copper medals are double doubloons artfully disguised. Here is a glass necklace of great value torn from some poor lady's throat. Here is a war medal which no doubt could tell a terrible secret. Here are silver and opals and rubies and small stuff of all sorts."

"And what will you do with it now?"

"We shall get four policemen to take it to London, and land it in the Safe Depository. So now, boys, I must go and do some work!"

"So must all of us!" said the smiling Lady, as she surveyed the flushed, mud-stained, squelch-booted group in front of her.

So there you are, daddies all—I make you a present of the Billy Bones game. It has its advantages. It can occupy anything from ten to one hundred of the most rowdy youngsters you can get together. It can be played within a hundred-yard garden or on a five-mile moor. It gives unlimited scope for ingenuity. It need not be a treasure alone. Billy Bones was a many-sided rascal. It may be a stolen will, or the blue eye of the Yellow God, or the gold imp that Raffles stole, or the head of the Shawnee maiden. But, like everything else that is worth doing at all, it needs concentration and doing well. Then you will find yourself a real Daddy and the true comrade of your kiddies.

Painting the Prince

A number of artists who have had the privilege of painting the Prince of Wales here give their impressions of him as a sitter. These vivid little notes contain many intimate details and convey an admirable idea of the Prince's charming personality. The article contains several portraits of the Prince which have never been reproduced, two of these having been graciously lent by Her Majesty the Queen.

By CECIL CUTLER.

IT is a matter of great pleasure to me to be the first artist to paint His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. So far back as the year 1897 I was painting a picture of the Duke of York (our present King), and during the sitting the Duke, after a short conversation with the Duchess, said to me: "Would you like to paint our little boy?" Naturally, I gladly assented, and one afternoon went to York House to commence my picture.

I well remember the feelings with which I awaited the arrival of the young Prince, for children are often more difficult to paint than they are to photograph, and I was anxious to produce some of my best work. The Prince, aged three years, entered the room with Sir Derek Keppel. He was dressed in a white embroidered frock with a sky-blue sash and "tie-ups." I was astonished to find how self-possessed he was for so young a child. During the first interview I told him that I had a little boy about his age at home, to which he replied: "Does he collect tram-tickets? Does he play cricket? Does he ride a pony?" almost in one breath. I was able to say "Yes" to the first two questions, but had to say "No" to the last. The Prince appeared to be much interested, and remarked that "*Grandma Marlborough House*" had given him a pony!

The sitting lasted for two hours—a longer one than is often given to painters by grown-ups—and the little Prince "stuck it" well." Before commencing the painting I stood Prince Edward up on a magnificent gilt and brocaded chair, but the Duchess of York (Queen Mary), on noticing this, quickly took down the little boy, and another chair was sent for better able to bear the strain. During the sitting the Prince stood on the chair while his nurse held up toys to attract his attention every now and then, with the reminder, "Prince Edward, look this way!"

There was, I remember, a little difficulty with the Prince's hair, which, in the ordinary way, was rather straight, and his mother took great care to ruffle up her little boy's hair to make it curly, but gave it up with the remark: "It's no use; I always have to have his hair curled when he is photographed!"

I finished the portrait in two sittings, each of two hours, and the Prince, for so young a boy, was very attentive and no trouble. On the occasion of my second visit to York House, he told me in the most solemn manner possible that "The Duke (his father) is presenting medals to the soldiers at Bisley this afternoon." And this from a child of three!

When the picture was finished, I showed it to Prince Edward, who remarked: "*That's me, sas' and all.*" I wonder if he remembers it now?

In the same year I painted three generations of the Royal Family: King Edward—Prince of Wales as he was then; the Duke

The Prince of Wales at the age of three
By CECIL CUTLER.
Graciously lent by Her Majesty the Queen.

At the Army Point-to-Point Races.
By CECIL CUTLER.

of York—our present King; and Prince Edward. I have not painted the Prince of Wales from a sitting since, because for many years now I have endeavoured to paint my portraits from life, without the subject knowing that he is being sketched for a picture. Many have said, in consequence, when shown the finished picture: "How on earth does the fellow do it? I never gave him a sitting."

The picture which is reproduced above of the Prince smoking a cigarette was obtained in this way. I was commissioned to paint a picture of the Prince talking to Lord Lonsdale at the Army Point-to-Point Races in 1921, for presentation to Lord Lonsdale by the Colonel of the Welsh Guards. When the picture was finished, it was seen by His Royal Highness, who expressed a wish to have a replica painted. That I was pleased enough to do, and it was completed just before the Prince sailed for India.

By SIR A. S. COPE, R.A.

It is a good many years since I had the honour of first painting His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. He was at that time, I think, a cadet at Dartmouth—or possibly a full-grown midshipman in the Navy. The little head portrait was painted for Her Majesty the Queen, and hangs in her private apartments at Buckingham Palace.

The other portrait of the Prince painted by me was a full-length one in the beautiful full dress of the Order of the Garter. His Royal Highness had just been admitted to the Order, and, with his fresh young face and the thin, hard legs of a fine runner, looked like a young Galahad in this old-world costume. In regard to the Prince's ability as a runner, I remember the King's Piper — Forsyth — an old acquaintance, telling me what a business he had, as a grown and athletic man, to keep up with the Prince when he was exercising in the gardens of the Palace.

As a Midshipman.
By SIR A. S. COPE, R.A.
Graciously lent by Her Majesty the Queen.

In the full dress of the Order of the Garter.

By SIR A. S. COPE, R.A.

By permission of William Doig & Co.

Painting the Prince

I feel it would be impertinence for me to express any opinion of the Prince's personality—its modesty, courage, and personal charm are now so widely known. But perhaps the general public little realize the terribly strenuous life a lad in such a high position has to lead, and the training in languages, politics, and general knowledge (as well as ordinary education) through which he has to go. In relation to this, there is photographed on my memory a picture of the young Prince in his shirt-sleeves, his elbows on the table and his head in his hands, with his tutor, Mr. Hansell, opposite, and the large table entirely covered with papers which His Royal Highness had to master.

Added to all this there is the professional work of an officer in the Navy—no small affair in itself alone—and later on that of a soldier. This, too, in war-time, when there was no use or room for ornamental officers. My own son has told me how the Prince would come into the first-line trench and cheer the men in the mud and misery.

I remember once, for some forgotten reason, His Royal Highness and I went from Buckingham Palace to Little Campden House together in a taxi. Near Rutland Gate something caught fire, and I thought with such a companion it would be advisable to get out, but the Prince said: "Oh, I expect it won't blow up; we'll stay it out," and *we did*. But with the smoke and the smell of burning I was relieved when we arrived without anything more serious happening.

The only other personal matter one might perhaps mention in connection with painting the Prince was his kindness in appreciating the necessity for him patiently to give the artist the sittings required for such work. He often stood for perhaps the best part of an hour in all the robes and trappings of "The Most Noble Order," and, instead of bearing any grudge towards his tormentor, had apparently most successfully succeeded in forgetting that part of it.

In Naval Uniform.
By E. DOROTHY McAVITY.

By
E. DOROTHY McAVITY.

I first met the Prince of Wales at a party at Government House, Halifax, in 1919, but it is not to be wondered at that he did not remember me when I was introduced to him by Sir Godfrey Thomas last year at St. James's Palace at the first sitting for his portrait.

I must confess that I had half expected His Royal Highness to be formal, but, after the two sittings which he gave me, my lasting impression is of his perfect naturalness and desire to make me "feel at home." I'm sure he was bored stiff at the idea of being painted, but he was making the best of it!

The sitting was given in his private room, and the easel for my canvas was provided by the Palace authorities, and was one with whose working and arrangement I was not familiar. In

preparing to start the preliminary sketches, therefore, there was some delay, for I could not erect the borrowed easel. The Prince immediately came to my rescue and struggled with the refractory easel himself, and eventually got it into position for me.

During the whole of the sitting the Prince smoked his pipe, but I left the pipe out of the finished picture.

I was particularly anxious that the Prince's hand should appear in the painting, but he, apparently, seemed to prefer the more sailor-like but less artistic pose of the closely folded arm, and I had occasionally to alter the pose for him.

In his robes as Chancellor of Cardiff University

By BERNARD MUNNS.

A rather pathetic incident occurred when I was finishing the painting at my studio. It was necessary to obtain a model of more or less the same stature as the Prince, who had lent me his naval uniform and ribbons in order that I might paint them correctly. Near the studio I had noticed a young demobilized soldier who was obviously "down on his luck," and, although he was not a professional model, I asked him to pose for me. This, arrayed in the Prince's splendid naval uniform, he did. I had not been at the picture more than five minutes before my model collapsed on the studio floor. He had been without food for so long that the strain of posing had almost immediately been too much for him. Fortunately, I had a kindly landlady at the studio, and after the food she provided he recovered and was able to finish the pose.

When the picture was completed, I took it to St. James's Palace, wrapped carefully in brown paper and tied with string. The

Prince's natural gaiety was again very obvious. No one but he was allowed to undo the parcel; he wanted to be the first to look at the picture. He soon stripped off the paper and held up the picture. "Oh, I say—that's jolly good!" he remarked, and I felt I had won the highest award. He was especially interested in the rows of orders and decorations, and said it looked as though they were really there themselves.

By BERNARD MUNNS.

Another Naval Portrait.
By DOUGLAS CHANDOR.

My portrait of the Prince of Wales is one of the latest of his portraits, having been painted last summer. The picture shows His Royal Highness standing in the hall of Cardiff University, where the Chancellorship was conferred on him.

I saw the Prince just after his return from his Indian tour. He was very tired and in great need of a rest, and had, in fact, a rest programme drawn up to keep him free of all engagements. I valued, therefore, all the more the sitting he gave me for this picture.

Previous to the Prince's return I had paid one or two visits to St. James's Palace, where I had shown my conception of the portrait to Captain Lascelles and Sir Sidney Greville, who both gave me most useful advice and criticism. I had consequently advanced the composition and sketched in the details of the picture—the elaborate black and gold robes of the Chancellor, and the historic background of Cardiff University—so that I was well prepared when I kept the appointment made for me by Captain Lascelles at St. James's Palace at the end of June.

A portrait of the Prince in ordinary dress.
By DOUGLAS CHANDOR.

My first impression of the Prince as he walked without ceremony into the room was of a slight, boyish figure, dressed in a grey lounge suit, with fair hair whose fairness was accentuated by the even tan of his face; alert and interested in manner; serious, but with a ready and friendly smile. From beginning to end he never gave me the slightest sense of artificiality, but seemed anxious to do everything he could to help me.

The Prince seemed very interested in parts of the picture which had already been done, and remarked that the robes were very well painted. After I had finished my work I asked him to criticize the picture, but he did not suggest anything for alteration or improvement. I remember particularly one rather humorous incident in this connection. I had painted the Prince's hair rather longer than one sometimes sees it, and when I pointed this out the Prince said: "I do look as if I could do with a hair-cut." When I asked if he would prefer to see it shorter, he said: "Oh, no, don't alter it—it suits the picture."

When the sitting was over His Royal Highness, as he shook hands, congratulated me on my work, and on leaving the room turned back with his friendly smile as he passed through the folding doors.

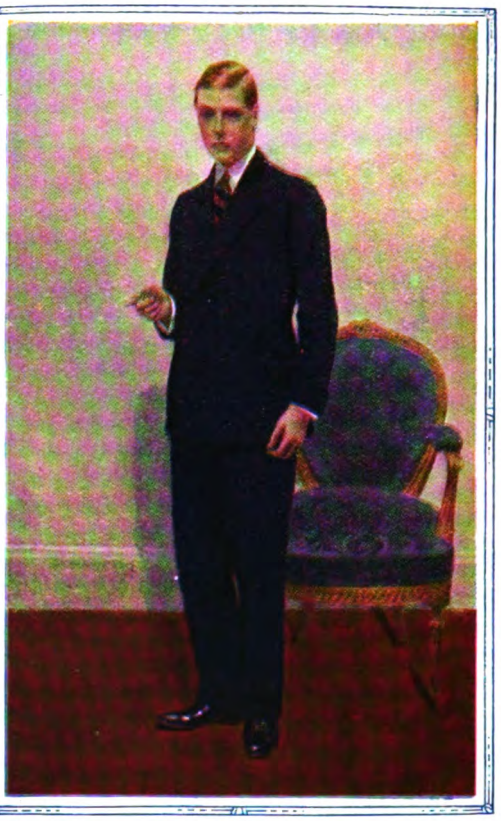
This portrait was painted just before the Prince's departure for the East.
By CAPTAIN A. E. BORTHWICK.

By DOUGLAS CHANDOR.

There are so many sides to the Prince of Wales's character—we know him as Prince, traveller, sailor, a few lucky ones as friend; some of us have met him as a soldier in France taking unforgettably strenuous exercise before breakfast, and others have jostled with him in London ballrooms. In all these we know him as a success—smiling, self-assured, charming. But as a patron of art or letters he is less known, and it is pleasant to find the same all-pervading personality here as elsewhere.

It seems that before the Prince travels the spirit of the Muse descends on him. The writer can remember how, just before he

A preliminary study for the portrait in the picture below.
By W. HOWARD ROBINSON.



set sail on his Indian tour, the Prince heard quoted in a sermon some verses of touching beauty and simplicity, and, though an obscure poem, succeeded in discovering the author before starting on his voyage. A few days before sailing for India the Prince favoured the sister art and commissioned me to paint his portrait.

This was remarkable because the Prince has always shown a strong aversion to being painted. He has that nervous, quick temperament that, while making him an admirable horseman, is apt to unfit him for the sedentary occupation of artist's model. Nevertheless, on this occasion the Prince overcame his natural repugnance, and, showing himself an admirable sitter, provided me with two of my best portraits. These were exhibited in Bond Street early this year, and are reproduced in colour with this article.

In the Ring at the National Sporting Club.
From an unfinished picture by
W. HOWARD ROBINSON.

Picture the feelings of a young artist of twenty-three suddenly commissioned to paint the Prince of Wales. Pride there was and gladness at the chance of making the acquaintance of this unique personality—but also some misgivings. As I drove up to St. James's Palace in a taxi, I felt all the natural fear of a private person about to approach Royalty, and of an artist about to be set a stiff trial of his skill, but mostly misgiving at the remembrance of a football match when, as a boy at Radley, I had the misfortune to kick the Prince, who was also playing. I trusted that this incident would not be remembered against me!

I was received in state at York House; no one mistook me for the piano-tuner, and I was led by a red-liveried footman to the Prince's quarters. Sir Godfrey Thomas, the secretary, welcomed me and led me all over the apartments in search of a good painting light—even the Prince's bedroom was examined. A drawing-room was finally chosen, and the secretary helped the artist to set up his easel. During this process the Prince himself appeared at a side door in a dressing-gown and announced his speedy arrival. He had been bathing after a game of squash. A few minutes later the sitting began.

A drawing-room is not an ideal studio. There is always the fear of dropping paint on the carpet, and Royal carpets are particularly awe-inspiring! The Prince, however, proved in one respect an ideal sitter—in the speed with which he made the artist feel at home, and in a few minutes the latter was hard at work sketching his subject, who laughed, chatted, and smoked before him. It was only a few days before his visit to India, and the Prince was worried and tired, for all his outward cheerfulness, at the great responsibilities the journey entailed. It was largely this that caused me, in both my portraits, to emphasize the more serious and less known side of my sitter—the grave eyes and long face rather than the smile of the Press photograph.

There were four sittings in all, of roughly an hour each. The Prince expressed his dislike to sitting, recalling a previous occasion when, for an equestrian portrait, he had been asked to mount a horse. He asked numerous questions about me, my work, my family, and my life; together we discussed common friends at Oxford, while the Prince at my request changed position constantly. Frequent telephone interruptions made the work difficult, but the Prince was obviously interested in the portrait, and this helped to make the work easy.

On the whole, though the task of painting the Prince of Wales is arduous and the risks of failure are great, there are many compensations. A century ago Sir Thomas Lawrence, then an unknown artist of twenty-five, found his compensation in displaying, to the vast annoyance of the rival Court artist, a notice proclaiming himself "Portrait Painter in Ordinary to the King." My own compensations have been three: the first when the Prince looked at the completed portraits, and, modestly disclaiming any powers of judgment, expressed his delight; the second, the reception given to them by critics and public; the third, a letter received from Mr. Mikulec, a remarkable Croatian, the owner of one of the finest autograph collections in the world.

Dear Sir (it ran),—

I am now collecting signatures here in Paris—am doing well. When I return to London will come to see you. Hoping the Providence will give you the power to make him look as great in the picture as he is in life,

Sincerely yours,
J. MIKULEC,
Globe Trotter "from Croatia."

The Providence gave the power; it also, in due time, brought Mr. Mikulec to my studio for my signature, for one day a remarkable foreigner in enormous hobnailed boots crossed the threshold to demand my promised autograph. He had just come from Downing Street, where he had obtained the signature of Mr. Lloyd George. Over his shoulder was a gigantic book, in which he had the signatures of every well-known man in the five continents—ciphers in Persian, Arabic, Japanese, and every known language.

By CAPTAIN A. E. BORTHWICK, A.R.E., R.S.W.

When, shortly before the Prince of Wales went out on his historic and momentous tour to India and the Far East, I received a commission to paint his portrait, I wondered how time was to be found for the necessary sittings on the very eve of his departure. Thanks, however, to the interest of the Prince in the undertaking, and the generous help I received from his staff, all difficulties were overcome. I would frequently go to St. James's Palace with my canvas, etc., only to find the Prince overwhelmed with official and other important appointments. After waiting for a while one of his equerries would explain the impossibility of a sitting that day, and would suggest that I should return at a more convenient moment. Under these conditions, the portrait (originally intended as a sketch only of the large picture of the Prince in Highland dress which is now under way) was painted. The sketch has been shown in the Exhibition of the Society of Scottish Artists and in the Royal Academy.

Painting the Prince

You ask my impressions of the Prince. I suggest that the portrait speaks for itself, and much more eloquently than I can in words. An artist instinctively studies character—and my feeling is that the Prince would acquit himself well in any walk of life. The finely-shaped head, with its width of eyes, and the great depth of the face from eye to ear, all denote intellect and sagacity, which will stand the Heir to the Throne in good stead in the future days.

Of the many things about the Prince which greatly impressed me, I will only mention first his extraordinary courtesy and what, for want of a better word, I will call tact; and, secondly, his remarkable power of concentration, and along with it a marvellous memory for persons and things. Largely to this quality of concentration on the business of the moment the portrait owed its success.

An interesting incident occurred on the day before the Prince sailed on the *Renown* from Southampton for the East. When the sketch was commenced, the Prince was wearing a grey tie, but on this day he wore a Guards' tie. "I wish you would paint me with my Guards' tie," said His Royal Highness. At that moment there was no time to make the change. So the Prince sent a servant to get one of his own ties for me to paint in later on. The man returned without it; all the Prince's kit was on the *Renown*. Nevertheless, one was handed to me before I left the Palace, and you may guess how it came to be available on the spot.

"Tell me what you like," said John Ruskin, "and I will tell you what you are." So also one may judge character by the friends a man gathers around him. Not the least of my impressions of my visits to St. James's Palace was the charm, sincerity, and directness of the entourage of the Prince.

The same great writer once described painting as a noble, expressive language, a vehicle of thought. Just as the orator or writer wrestles with great difficulty to catch the *mot juste*, to round a sentence with a fitting phrase, so the artist is sometimes hard put to it to reproduce that elusive, indescribable something—personality, if you will—that surrounds his sitter. Painting the Prince of Wales presented such a difficulty to me. There is a wistfulness—almost a sadness—about the Prince which is tremendously difficult to get on to the canvas. One regards him with admiration and pride; his charm is absolutely his own. There is much force in his pose—the force of nervous energy. Hands reveal character no less than heads, eyes, and faces. The strong man glorying in the consciousness of his strength will clench his hands and stand with the firmness of a rock. The Prince is different. The long, thin, nervous hands have beauty and strength—the beauty of the willow and the strength of true steel.

By W. HOWARD ROBINSON.

There is a particular historical interest attaching to my picture of the Prince of Wales at the National Sporting Club, for the occasion was the first time that Royalty had been in the ring officially. The records of the National Sporting Club tell us that "the eldest son of George III. was a frequent attendant at the side of the twenty-four-foot ring," but that was, of course, long before the National Sporting Club was founded, and at the time when fights took place in the open in Covent Garden.

I was present at the fight between Wilde and Lynch in March, 1919—as I am present at all the fights at the N.S.C., of which I am a member—and I well remember the Prince stepping into the ring to congratulate the men at the end of the fight. The Earl of Lonsdale went in with him. In the ring may also be seen "Peggy" Bettinson, the manager of the club, and outside, in the left-hand corner of the picture, are the Duke of York and Commander Greig. John Douglas, sen., was the referee, and his two sons, "Pickles" and "J. W. H. T.," the cricketer, are also in the picture.

I was asked to paint the picture of this historic scene of the Heir to the Throne in the boxing ring, and I went to York House for the sitting. It is impossible, of course, in the short time Royalty is able to give the artist to paint the whole picture, so that one has to make preliminary studies, the result of which is seen in the water-colour painting of the Prince in the blue of civilian clothes in the top picture.

When it was nearly finished the Prince said to me: "I am afraid I do not know very much about painting, but may I be allowed to offer a little criticism?" "Certainly, sir," I replied. "Then don't you think my collar is a little too high? It has the effect of making my neck look a bit short. It's not your fault, though; it's those blessed laundry people who have washed my collars all wrong."

This picture I utilized to paint the larger picture of the Prince in the ring, and, in His Royal Highness's absence in Canada, his khaki uniform was put on to a wooden figure, like a tailor's "dummy," from which I painted it. The Prince expressed his regret that he could not give me any further sittings, so near was it to the time of his departure for Canada, and remarked in excuse that he had "so much confounded shopping to do!"

His Brother's Keeper

by

W.W.JACOBS

Mr. W. W. Jacobs is known not only as a humorous writer but as the author of some of the most thrilling "sensation" stories ever written. The following will take its place beside "The Monkey's Paw" and "The Brown Man's Servant." It is a "horror-story" by a master.

I.

ANTHONY KELLER, white and dazed, came stumbling out into the small hall and closed the door of his study noiselessly behind him. Only half an hour ago he had entered the room with Henry Martle, and now Martle would never leave it again until he brought him out.

He took out his watch and put it back again without looking at it. He sank into a chair and, trying to still his quivering legs, strove to think. The clock behind the closed door struck nine. He had ten hours; ten hours before the woman who attended to his small house came to start the next day's work.

Ten hours! His mind refused to act. There was so much to be done, so much to be thought of. God! If only he could have the last ten minutes over again and live it differently. If Martle only had not happened to say that it was a sudden visit and that nobody knew of it.

He went into the back room and, going to the sideboard, gulped down half a tumbler of raw whisky. It seemed to him inconceivable that the room should look the same. This pleasant room, with etchings on the walls, and his book, face downwards, just as he had left it to answer Martle's knock. He could hear the knock now, and——

The empty tumbler smashed in his hand, and he caught his breath in a sob. Somebody else was knocking. He stood for a moment quivering, and then, wiping some of the blood from his hand, kicked the pieces of glass aside and stood irresolute. The knocking came again, so loud and insistent that for one horrible moment he fancied it might arouse the thing in the next room. Then he walked to the door and opened it. A short sturdy man, greeting him noisily, stepped into the hall.

"Thought you were dead," he said, breezily. "Hallo!"

"Cut myself with a broken glass," said Keller, in a constrained voice.

"Look here, that wants binding up," said his friend. "Got a clean handkerchief?"

He moved towards the door, and was about to turn the handle when Keller flung himself upon him and dragged him back. "Not there," he said, thickly. "Not there."

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"What the devil's the matter?" inquired the visitor, staring.

Keller's mouth worked. "Somebody in there," he muttered; "somebody in there. Come here."

He pushed him into the back room and in a dazed fashion motioned him to a chair.

"Thanks, rather not," said the other, stiffly. "I just came in to smoke a pipe. I didn't know you had visitors. Anyway, I shouldn't eat them. Good night."

Keller stood staring at him. His friend stared back, then suddenly his eyes twinkled and he smiled roguishly.

"What have you got in there?" he demanded, jerking his thumb towards the study.

Keller shrank back. "Nothing," he stammered. "Nothing—no——"

"Ho, ho!" said the other. "All right. Don't worry. Mum's the word. You quiet ones are always the worst. Be good."

He gave him a playful dig in the ribs and went out chuckling. Keller, hardly breathing, watched him to the gate and, closing the door softly, bolted it and returned to the back room.

He steadied his nerves with some more whisky, and strove to steel himself to the task before him. He had got to conquer his horror and remorse, to overcome his dread of the thing in the next room, and put it where no man should ever see it. He, Anthony Keller, a quiet, ordinary citizen, had got to do this thing.

The little clock in the next room struck ten. Nine hours left. With a soft tread he went out at the back door and, unlocking the bicycle-shed, peered in. Plenty of room.

He left the door open and, returning to the house, went to the door of the study. Twice he turned the handle—and softly closed the door again. Suppose when he looked in at Martle, Martle should turn and look at him? He turned the handle suddenly and threw the door open.

Martle was quiet enough. Quiet and peaceful, and, perhaps, a little pitiful. Keller's fear passed, but envy took its place. Martle had got the best of it after all. No horror-haunted life for him; no unavailing despair and fear of the unknown. Keller, looking down at the white face and battered head, thought of the years before him. Or would it be weeks? With a gasp he came back to the need for action, and taking Martle by the shoulders drew him, with heels dragging and scraping, to the shed.

He locked the door and put the key in his pocket. Then he drew a bucket of water from the scullery-tap and found some towels. His injured hand was still bleeding, but he regarded it with a sort of cunning satisfaction. It would account for much.

It was a long job, but it was finished at last. He sat down and thought, and then searched round and round the room for the overlooked thing which might be his undoing.

It was nearly midnight, and necessary, unless he wanted to attract the attention of any passing constable, to extinguish or lower the companionable lights. He turned them out swiftly, and, with trembling haste, passed upstairs to his room.

The thought of bed was impossible. He lowered the gas and, dropping into a chair, sat down to wait for day. Erect in the chair, his hands gripping the arms, he sat tense and listening. The quiet house was full of faint sounds, odd creakings, and stealthy rustlings. Suppose the suddenly released spirit of Martle was wandering around the house!

He rose and paced up and down the room, pausing every now and then to listen. He could have sworn that there was something fumbling blindly at the other side of the door, and once, turning sharply, thought that he saw the handle move. Sometimes sitting and sometimes walking, the hours passed until the occasional note of a bird outside announced the approach of day.

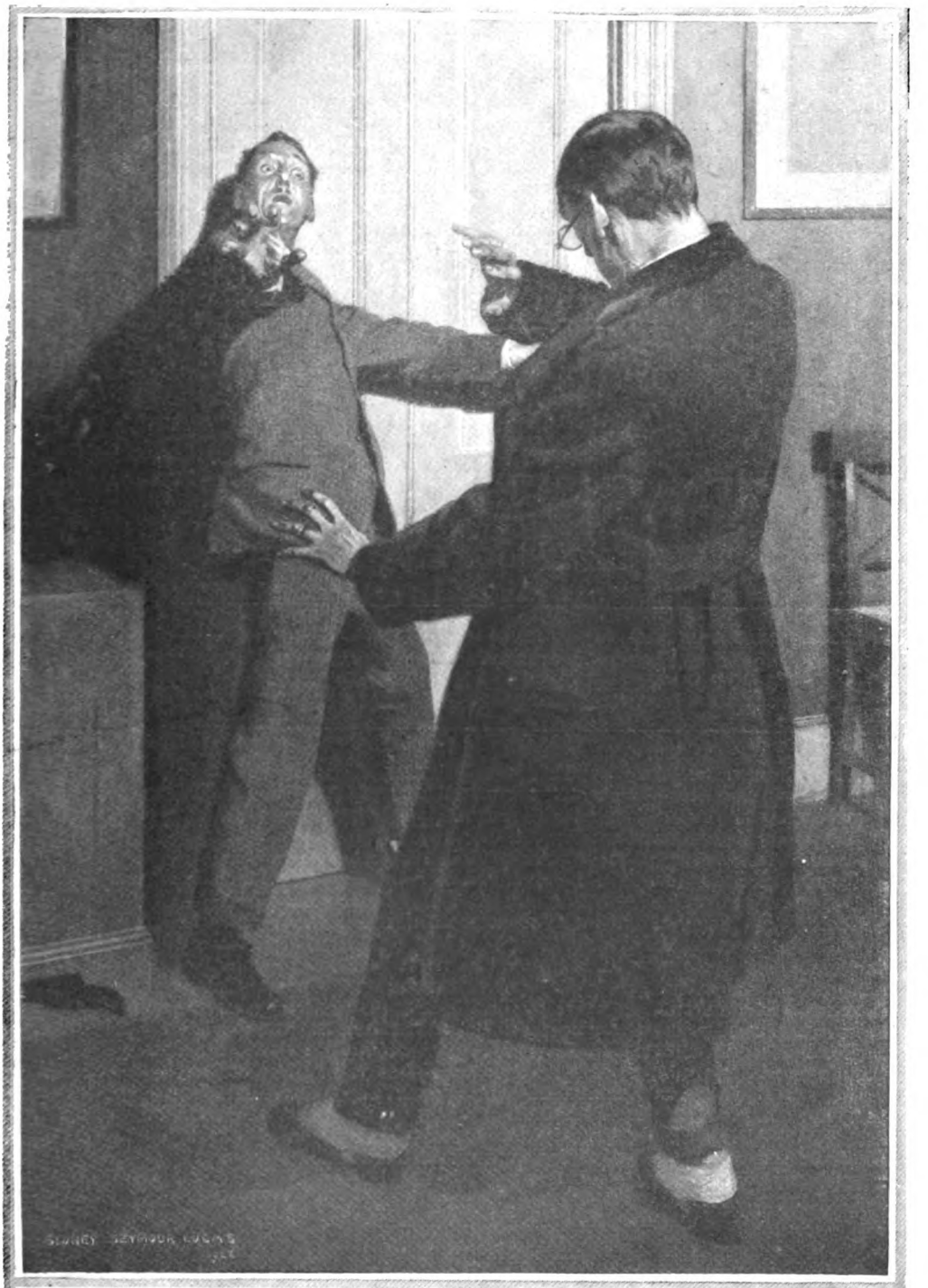
II.

IN the bright light of day his courage returned, and, dismissing all else from his mind, he thought only of how to escape the consequences of his crime. Inch by inch he examined the room and the hall. Then he went into the garden, and, going round the shed, satisfied himself that no crack or hole existed that might reveal his secret. He walked the length of the garden and looked about him. The nearest house was a hundred yards away, and the bottom of the garden screened by trees. Near the angle of the fence he would dig a shallow trench and over it pile up a rockery of bricks and stones and earth. Once started he could take his time about it, and every day would make him more and more secure. There was an air of solidity and permanency about a rockery that nothing else could give.

He was back in the house when the charwoman arrived, and in a few words told her of his accident of the night before. "I cleaned up the—the mess as well as I could," he concluded.

Mrs. Howe nodded. "I'll have a go at it while you're having your breakfast," she remarked. "Good job for you, sir, that you ain't one o' them as faints at the sight of blood."

She brought coffee and bacon into the little back dining-room, and Keller, as he sat drinking his coffee and trying to eat, heard her at work in the study. He pushed



He was about to turn the handle of the door when Keller dragged him back. "Not there," he said, thickly. "Somebody in there."

away his plate at last, and filling a pipe from which all flavour had departed sat smoking and thinking.

He was interrupted by Mrs. Howe. She stood in the doorway with a question which numbed his brain, and for a time arrested speech.

"Eh?" he said at last.

"Key of the bicycle-shed," repeated the woman, staring at him. "You had a couple o' my dusters to clean your bicycle with."

Keller felt in his pockets, thinking, thinking. "H'mm!" he said at last, "I'm afraid I've mislaid it. I'll look for it presently."

Mrs. Howe nodded. "You do look bad," she said, with an air of concern. "P'r'aps you hurt yourself more than what you think."

Keller forced a smile and shook his head, sinking back in his chair as she vanished, and trying to control his quivering limbs.

For a long time he sat inert, listening dully to the movements of Mrs. Howe as she bustled to and fro. He heard her washing the step at the back door, and, after that, a rasping, grating noise to which at first he paid but little heed. Then there was a faint, musical chinking as of keys knocking together. *Keys!*

He sprang from his chair like a madman, and dashed to the door. Mrs. Howe, with a bunch of odd keys tied on a string, had inserted one in the lock of the bicycle-shed, and was striving to turn it.

"Stop!" cried Keller, in a dreadful voice. "STOP!"

He snatched the keys from her, and, flinging them from him, stood mouthing dumbly at her. The fear in her eyes recalled him to his senses.

"Spoil the lock," he muttered, "spoil the lock. Sorry. I didn't mean to shout. No sleep all night. Neuralgia; 'fraid my nerves are wrong."

The woman's face relaxed and her eyes softened. "I saw you weren't yourself as soon as I saw you this morning," she exclaimed.

She went back into the house, but he thought she eyed him curiously as she passed. She resumed her work, but in a subdued fashion, and, two or three times that morning meeting his eyes, nervously turned away her own. He realized at last that he was behaving in an unusual fashion altogether. In and out of the house, and, in the garden, never far from the shed.

By lunch-time he had regained control of himself. He opened a bottle of beer, and, congratulating Mrs. Howe upon the grilling of the chops, went on to speak of her husband and the search for work which had been his only occupation since his marriage ten years before. Some of the fear went out of the woman's eyes—but not all, and it was with obvious relief that she left the room.

For some time after lunch Keller stayed in the dining-room, and that in itself was unusual. Two or three times he got up and resolved, for the sake of appearances, to take a short walk, but the shed held him. He dare not leave it unguarded. With a great effort he summoned up sufficient resolution to take him to the bottom of the garden and start his gruesome task.

He dug roughly, avoiding the shape which might have aroused comment from any chance visitor. The ground was soft and, in spite of his injured hand, he made good progress, breaking off at frequent intervals to listen, or to move aside and obtain an unobstructed view of the shed.

With a short break for tea he went on with his task until he was called in to his simple meal at seven. The manual labour had done him good and his appearance was almost normal. To Mrs. Howe he made a casual reference to his afternoon's work and questioned where to obtain the best rock-plants.

With her departure after she had cleared away, fear descended upon him again. The house became uncanny and the shed a place of unspeakable horror. Suppose his nerve failed and he found himself unable to open it! For an hour he paced up and down in the long twilight, waiting for the dark.

IT came at last, and, fighting down his fears and nausea, he drew the garden-barrow up to the shed, and took the key from his pocket. He walked to the front gate and looked up and down the silent road. Then he came back and, inserting the key in the lock, opened the door, and, in the light of an electric torch, stood looking down at what he had placed there the night before.

With his ears alert for the slightest sound, he took the inhabitant of the shed by the shoulders, and, dragging it outside, strove to lift it into the barrow. He succeeded at last, and, with the rigid body balanced precariously and the dead face looking up into his, seized the handles and slowly and silently took Martle to the place prepared for him.

He did not leave him for a long time. Not until the earth was piled high above him in a circular mound and a score or two of bricks formed the first beginnings of a rockery. Then he walked slowly up the garden, and, after attending to the shed, locked it up and went indoors.

The disposal of the body gave a certain measure of relief. He would live, with time

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for repentance, and, perhaps, for forgetting. He washed in the scullery, and then, fearing the shadows upstairs, drew the heavy curtains in the dining-room to shut in the light and settled himself in an easy-chair; He drank until his senses were deadened; his nerves quietened, his aching limbs relaxed, and he fell into a heavy sleep.

III.

HE awoke at six, and, staggering to his feet, drew back the curtains and turned out the gas. Then he went upstairs, and after disarranging his bed went to the bath-room. The cold water and a shave, together with a change of linen, did him good. He opened doors and windows, and let the clean sweet air blow through the house. The house which he must continue to inhabit because he dare not leave it. Other people might not share his taste for rockeries.

To the watchful eye of Mrs. Howe he appeared to be almost himself again. The key of the shed had turned up, and he smiled as he presented her with her "precious dusters." Then he rode off on his bicycle to order slabs of stone and plants from the nearest nurseryman.

He worked more and more leisurely as the days passed, and the rockery grew larger and more solid. Every added stone and plant seemed to increase his security. He ate well, and, to his surprise, slept well; but every morning misery opened his eyes for him.

The garden was no longer a place of quiet recreation; the house, which was part of the legacy that had so delighted him only a year before, was a prison in which he must serve a life-long sentence. He could neither let it nor sell it; other people might alter the garden—and dig. Since the fatal evening he had not looked at a newspaper for fear of reading of Martle's disappearance, and in all that time had not spoken to a friend.

Martle was very quiet. There were no shadows in the house, no furtive noises, no dim shape pattering about the garden by night. Memory was the only thing that assailed him; but it sufficed.

Then the dream came. A dream confused and grotesque, as most dreams are. He dreamt that he was standing by the rockery, in the twilight, when he thought he saw one of the stones move. Other stones followed suit. A big slab near the top came slithering down, and it was apparent that the whole pile of earth and stone was being shaken by some internal force. Something was trying to get out. Then he remembered that he was buried there, and had no business to be standing outside. He must get back. Martle had put him there, and for some reason which he was quite unable to remember he was afraid of Martle. He procured his tools and set to work. It was a long and tedious job and made more difficult by the fact that he was not allowed to make a noise. He dug and dug, but the grave had disappeared. Then suddenly something took hold of him and held him down; down. He could neither move nor cry out.

He awoke with a scream and for a minute or two lay trembling and shaking. Thank God, it was only a dream. The room was full of sunlight, and he could hear Mrs. Howe moving about downstairs. Life was good and might yet hold something in store for him.

He lay still for ten minutes, and was about to rise when he heard Mrs. Howe running upstairs. Even before her sudden and heavy rapping on the door he scented disaster.

"Mr. Keller! Mr. Keller!"

"Well?" he said, heavily.

"Your rockery!" gasped the charwoman. "Your beautiful rockery! All gone!"

"*Gone?*" shouted Keller, springing out of bed and snatching his dressing-gown from the door.

"Pulled all to pieces," said Mrs. Howe, as he opened the door. "You never see such a mess. All over the place, as if a madman had done it"

In a mechanical fashion he thrust his feet into slippers and went downstairs. He hurried down the garden, and, waving the woman back, stood looking at the ruin. Stones and earth were indeed all over the place, but the spot that mattered was untouched. He stood gazing and trembling. Who could have done it? Why was it done?

He thought of his dream and the truth burst upon him No need for his aching back and limbs to remind him. No need to remember the sleep-walking feats of his youth. He knew the culprit now.

"Shall I go for the police?" inquired the voice of Mrs. Howe.

Keller turned a stony face upon her. "No," he said, slowly. "I—I'll speak to them about it myself."

He took up the spade and began the task of reconstruction. He worked for an hour, and then went in to dress and breakfast. For the rest of the day he worked slowly and steadily, so that by evening most of the damage had been repaired. Then he went indoors to face the long night.

Sleep, man's best friend, had become his unrelenting enemy. He made himself coffee on the gas-stove and fought his

drowsiness cup by cup. He read and smoked and walked about the room. Bits of his dream, that he had forgotten, came back to him and stayed with him. And ever at the back of his mind was the certainty that he was doomed.

There was only one hope left to him. He would go away for a time. Far enough away to render a visit home in his sleep impossible. And perhaps the change of scene would strengthen him and help his frayed nerves. Afterwards it might be possible to let the house for a time on condition that the garden was not interfered with. It was one risk against another.

He went down the garden as soon as it was light and completed his work. Then he went indoors to breakfast and to announce his plans for sudden departure to Mrs. Howe, his white and twitching face amply corroborating his tale of neuralgia and want of sleep.

"Things'll be all right," said the woman, "I'll ask the police to keep an eye on the house of a night. I did speak to one last night about them brutes as destroyed the rockery. If they try it again they may get a surprise."

Keller quivered but made no sign. He went upstairs and packed his bag, and two hours later was in the train on his way to Exeter, where he proposed to stay the night. After that, Cornwall, perhaps.

He secured a room at an hotel and went for a stroll to pass the time before dinner. How happy the people in the streets seemed to be, even the poorest! All free and all sure of their freedom. They could eat and sleep and enjoy the countless trivial things that make up life. Of battle and murder and sudden death they had no thought.

The light and bustle of the dining-room gave him a little comfort. After his lonely nights it was good to know that there were people all around him, that the house would be full of them whilst he slept. He felt that he was beginning a fresh existence. In future he would live amongst a crowd.

It was late when he went upstairs, but he lay awake for a few minutes. A faint sound or two reached him from downstairs, and the movements of somebody in the next room gave him a comfortable feeling of security. With a sigh of content he fell asleep.

HE was awakened by a knocking; a knocking which sounded just above the head of his bed and died away almost before he had brushed the sleep from his eyes. He looked around fearfully, and then, lighting his candle, lay listening. The noise was not repeated. He had been dreaming, but he could not remember the substance of his dream. It had been unpleasant, but vague. More than unpleasant, terrifying. Somebody had been shouting at him. *Shouting!*

He fell back with a groan. The faint hopes of the night before died within him. *He* had been shouting and the strange noise came from the occupant of the next room. What had he said? and what had his neighbour heard?

He slept no more. From somewhere below he heard a clock toll the hours, and, tossing in his bed, wondered how many more remained to him.

Day came at last and he descended to breakfast. The hour was early and only two other tables were occupied, from one of which, between mouthfuls, a bluff-looking, elderly man eyed him curiously. He caught Keller's eye at last and spoke.

"Better?" he inquired.

Keller tried to force his quivering lips to a smile.

"Stood it as long as I could," said the other; "then I knocked. I thought perhaps you were delirious. Same words over and over again; sounded like 'Mockery' and 'Mortal,' 'Mockery' and 'Mortal.' You must have used them a hundred times."

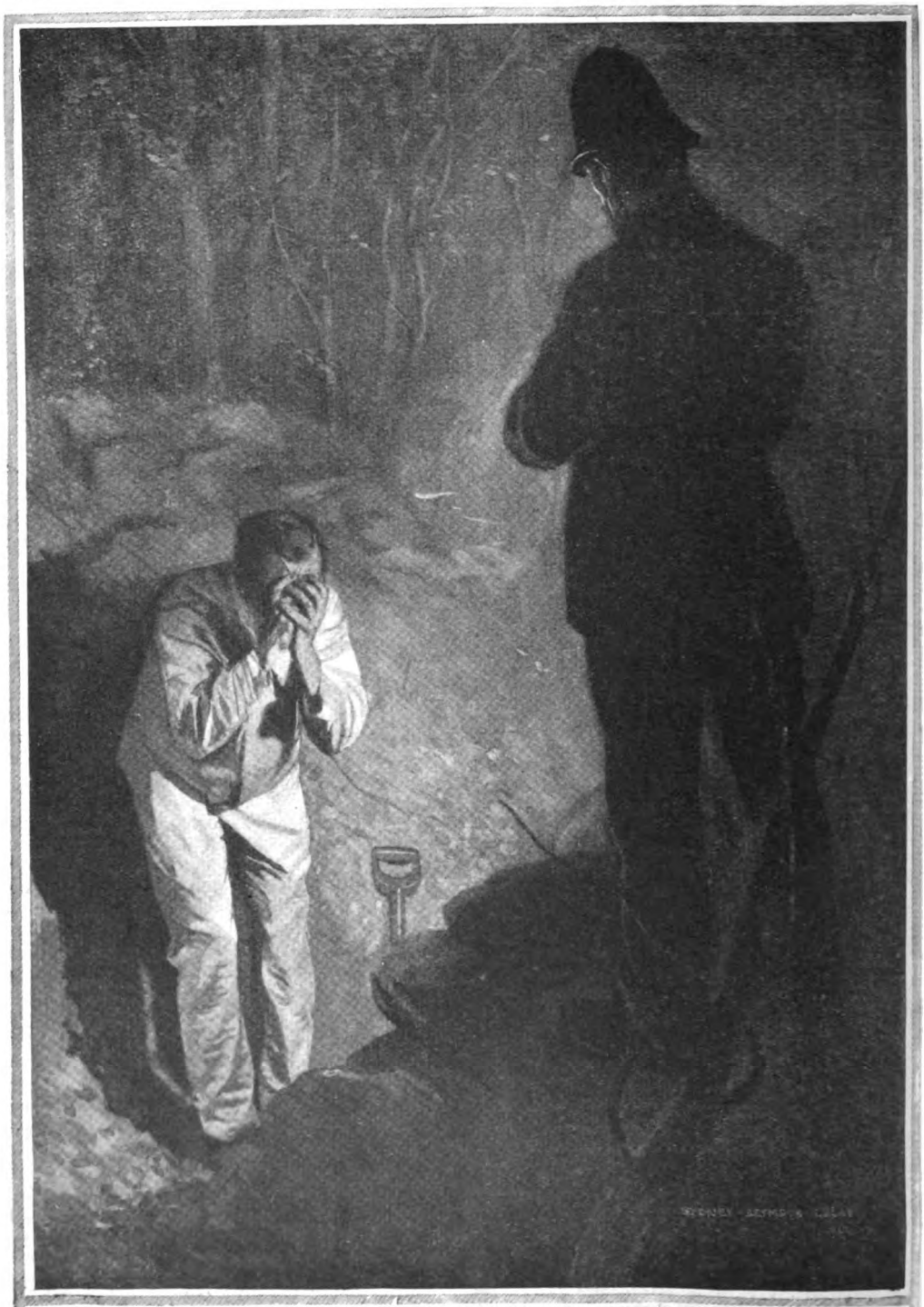
Keller finished his coffee, and, lighting a cigarette, went and sat in the lounge. He had made his bid for freedom and failed. He looked up the times of the trains to town and rang for his bill.

IV.

HE was back in the silent house, upon which, in the fading light of the summer evening, a great stillness seemed to have descended. The atmosphere of horror had gone and left only a sense of abiding peace. All fear had left him, and pain and remorse had gone with it. Serene and tranquil he went into the fatal room, and, opening the window, sat by it, watching the succession of shadowy tableaux that had been his life. Some of it good and some of it bad, but most of it neither good nor bad. A very ordinary life until fate had linked it for all time with that of Martle's. He was a living man bound to a corpse with bonds that could never be severed.

It grew dark and he lit the gas and took a volume of poems from the shelves. Never before had he read with such insight and appreciation. In some odd fashion all his senses seemed to have been sharpened and refined.

He read for an hour, and then, replacing the book, went slowly upstairs. For a long time he lay in bed thinking and trying to



The light was unbearable, and with a wild cry he dropped his spade and clapped his hands over his eyes.

analyse the calm and indifference which had overtaken him, and, with the problem still unsolved, fell asleep.

For a time he dreamt, but of pleasant, happy things. He seemed to be filled with a greater content than he had ever known before, a content which did not leave him even when these dreams faded and he found himself back in the old one.

This time, however, it was different. He was still digging, but not in a state of frenzy and horror. He dug because something told him it was his duty to dig, and only by digging could he make reparation. And it was a matter of no surprise to him that Martle stood close by looking on. Not the Martle he had known, nor a bloody and decaying Martle, but one of grave and noble aspect. And there was a look of understanding on his face that nearly made Keller weep.

He went on digging with a sense of companionship such as he had never known before. Then suddenly, without warning, the sun blazed out of the darkness and struck him full in the face. The light was unbearable, and with a wild cry he dropped his spade and clapped his hands over his eyes. The light went, and a voice spoke to him out of the darkness.

He opened his eyes on a dim figure standing a yard or two away.

"Hope I didn't frighten you, sir," said the voice. "I called to you once or twice and then I guessed you were doing this in your sleep."

"In my sleep," repeated Keller. "Yes."

"And a pretty mess you've made of it," said the constable, with a genial chuckle. "Lord! to think of you working at it every day and then pulling it down every night. Shouted at you I did, but you wouldn't wake."

He turned on the flashlight that had dazzled Keller, and surveyed the ruins. Keller stood by, motionless—and waiting.

"Looks like an earthquake," muttered the constable. He paused, and kept the light directed upon one spot. Then he stooped down and scratched away the earth with his fingers, and tugged. He stood up suddenly and turned the light on Keller, while with the other hand he fumbled in his pocket. He spoke in a voice cold and official.

"Are you coming quietly?" he asked.

Keller stepped towards him with both hands outstretched.

"I am coming quietly," he said, in a low voice. "Thank God!"

SOLUTION OF LAST MONTH'S "EXERCISE IN ANAGRAMS"

The **Parsonage,**
Maidenhead.

My dear **Geraldine,**—

I am sitting beside our **tennis-court** and everywhere is **gorgeous.** My **pater** is apt to **prate** of the **landscape** at home, but it cannot hold a **taper** to ours. Without **desiring** to **enthuse** and prove **irksome** my **estimation** of it is—a **heavenly** and wonderful **panorama**! Though **pedantic** at times sights like these make me wish I were a **seraph** to sing in **phrase** divine. But perhaps I am **fanciful.**

All my **herbaceous** plants are doing well, but I have had much **trouble** with my **sweet-peas,** owing **apparently** to the **drought.**

At Messrs. **Selfridge,** Ltd., last week I was put in a very **inconceivable** and awkward **predicament** by a **kleptomaniac. Doubtless** becoming nervous she left her **gleanings** in my **umbrella** and **disappeared,** leaving me in my **ignorance.**

Being alone in the **department** (through which I was passing on my way out) when the discovery was made, I was **interrogated.** What a **revelation** the **result** was! After much **palavering** I **satisfied** them by saying: "Do you seriously, **superintendent,** think I have any use for ladies' **suspenders** and **safety-pins**?" Although I felt **malevolent** I quite saw the mistake was not **inexcusable.**

Catherine goes off to **St. Andrews** next term—a long way, I know. But as it is **indubitable** that the **railways** are less **unreliable** than formerly, she should not now be **flustered** with **connections.** I hate **journeying** and am no **paragon,** having no **forbearance** for **inefficiency** and bad **administration**—especially as regards the **catering.** But with her own **edibles** and her **ordinarily** good **digestion** all should be well.

How did you enjoy **Ascot**? Long ago when **weights** were first **disclosed** I was given **Saxe-Blue C,** but as it was a **non-starter** my **credit** was not harmed.

The **prevalence** of **operations** for **appendicitis** is **strange.** Do you remember Bill **Oldershaw**? We were both at **Charterhouse** and later in **Palestine** together. Even then he was **threatened** with it. However, **complications** being absent, he is **progressing** quite **straightforwardly.**

My **destination** is now the **asparagus-bed,** where **nettles are appearing,** so I must close.

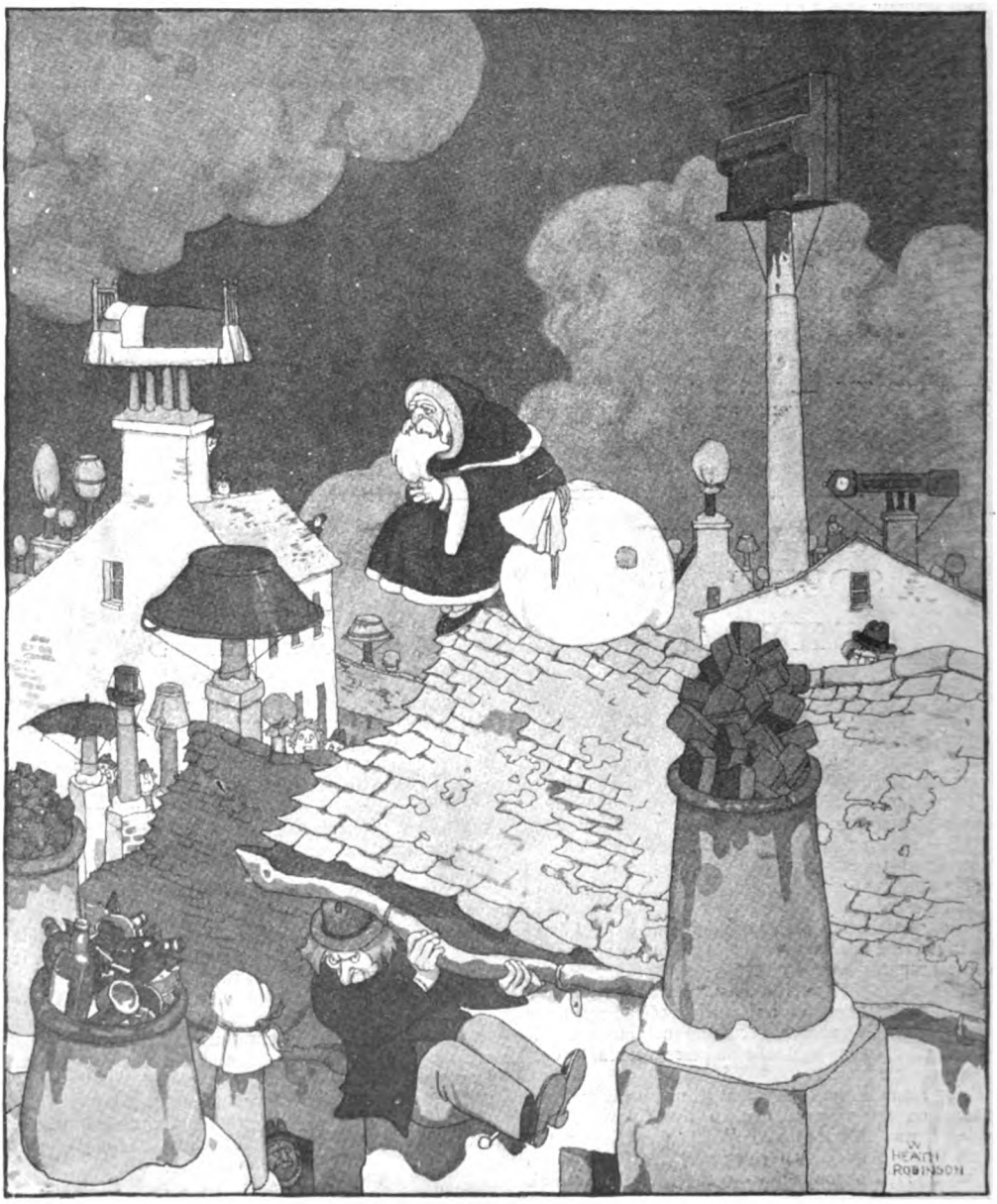
Yours ever,

Roginald.

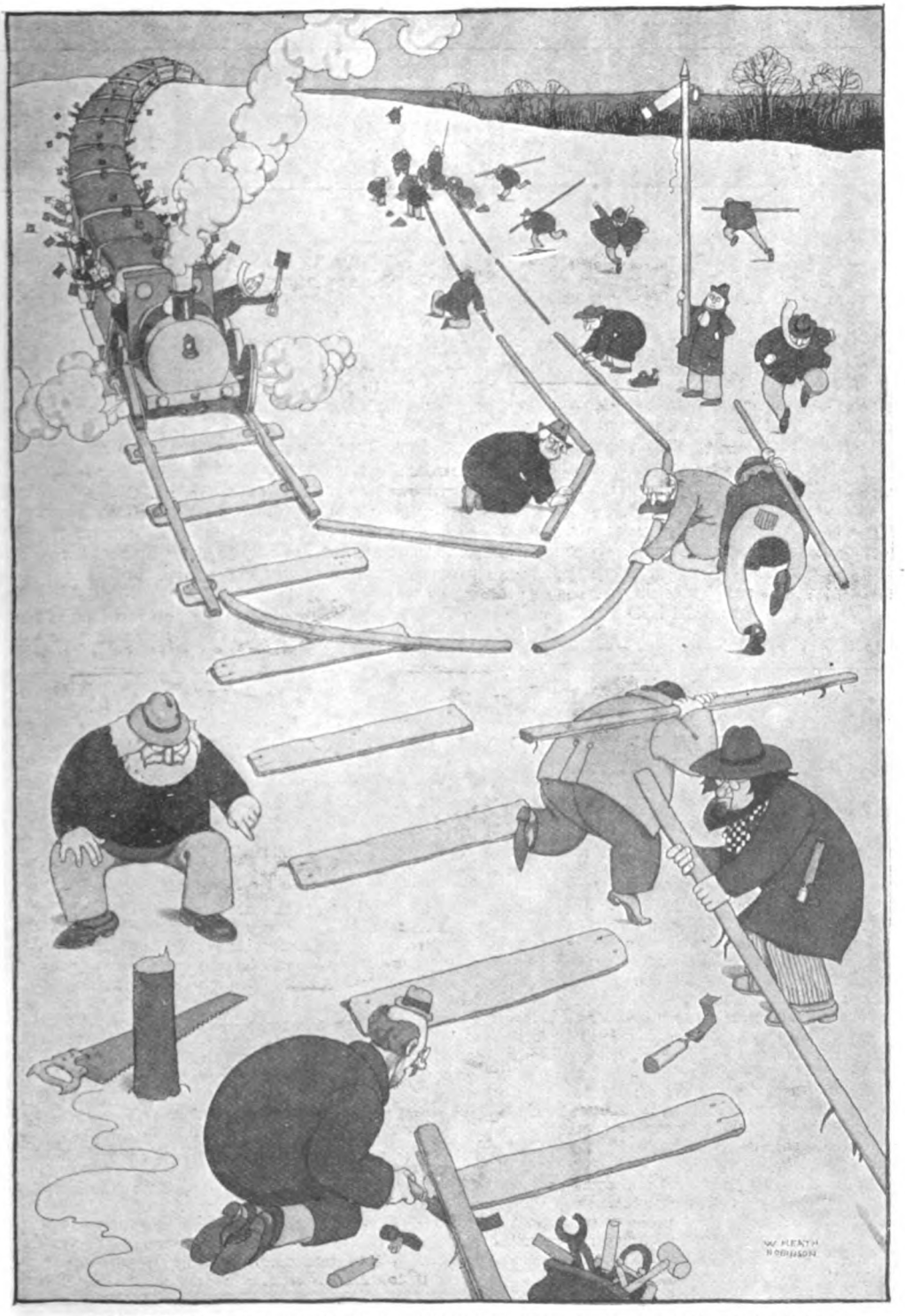
Some Bolshevist Anti-Christmas Plots

By

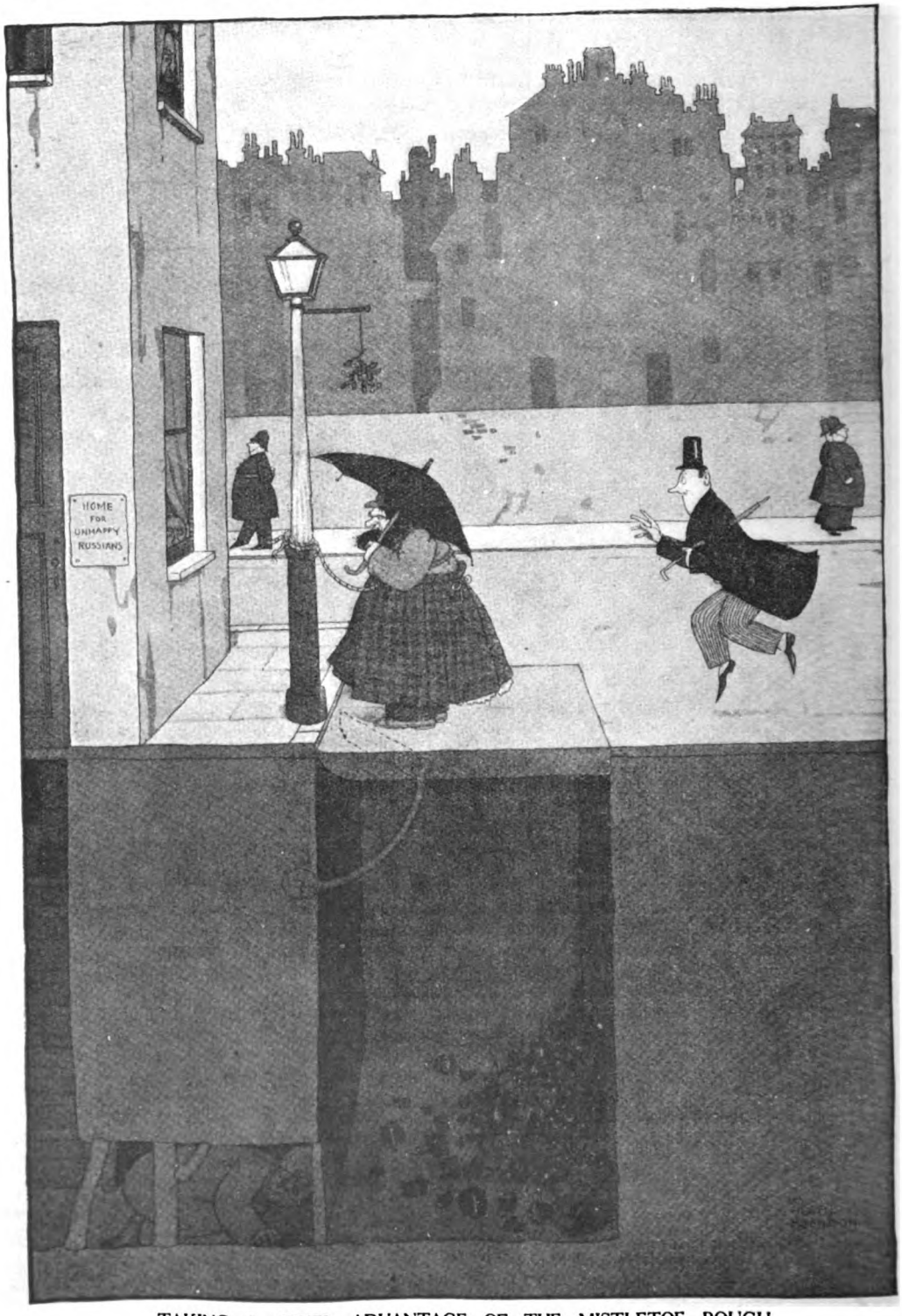
W. HEATH ROBINSON.



"NO ADMITTANCE!"



A DASTARDLY ATTEMPT TO SEND HOME-RETURNING BOYS BACK TO SCHOOL.



TAKING A CRUEL ADVANTAGE OF THE MISTLETOE BOUGH.

Mustard-Pot-Duellist

by

GILBERT FRANKAU

ILLUSTRATED BY GILBERT HOLIDAY

I.

DESPITE all that is implied by those words "Copyright in the U.S.A.," which the British reader should observe at the foot of this page, it has to be admitted that my friend, Sir Victor Lomondham, Bart., of Lomondham Hall, Leicestershire, and Charles Street, Mayfair, cherishes something more than a prejudice against Americans. Understanding them hardly at all, he regards them, if not exactly as aliens, at least as foreigners.

Hence, when, in the hard-up days which preceded his marriage with Marigold Somerby, my Lord Pickworth (described in Debrett as "the eldest son of the eighth Earl of Knossington," and in the Saloon Bar of the Horn and Holla at Rorkton as "good old Pickie") managed, during a short and unsuccessful heiress-hunting trip across the Atlantic, to induce that Master of New England Foxhounds, Martin S. van Rensalder, to transport himself, his wife, and a brace of daughters (but none of his horses, because, as explained the persuasive Pickie, "You'd far better let me pick you up a couple of dozen good 'uns at Tat's") to Little Parbury Grange for the season, Victor Lomondham decided, with a terse "Dash it all, life in the Shires is quite expensive enough as it is. They'll only put up the price of everything with their infernal dollars," that his and his wife's acquaintance with their new neighbours should be limited to a very stiff "Good morning" in the hunting-field.

Chance, however, and Mrs. Martin S., whose Chalmers Six limousine happened to be the nearest car within hail on the day that Naomi Lomondham, putting Silver Glory sideways at an almost unjumpable piece of timber, succeeded in breaking her fifth rib as well as the top rail, reversed Victor's decision, establishing between Lomondham Hall and Parbury Grange an intimacy which was as galling to him as it was timely for his wife.

For there is no boredom comparable to that of your five-day-a-week woman when she is temporarily *hors de combat* from the hunting-field, and Mrs. Martin S. van Rensalder's company—even though she spoke of the "best little bitches in England" as "those cute doggies"—relieved many of Naomi's lonely hours. While as for Mrs. Martin's husband, he, with his extravagant sympathy and equally extravagant gifts, formed quite a pleasant contrast to the dour "Well-me-dear-it-was-your-own-fault-for-putting-the-nag-at-a-rotten-place-so-what's-the-good-of-grumbling-about-it" Victor.

Which last domestic tit-bit I publish under all reserve, it having been thrown to me, along with various other scraps of material which I have done my best to work up into the ensuing tale, on a certain off-afternoon when the rain pattered like hail-shot on the tiled courtyard of the Lomondham stables and all the horses, my gigantic yellow friend Mustard-Pot among them, were scandal-mongering from manger to manger after the habit of their two-legged betters.

II.

"TOSS?" said Victor, irritably, as he unwedged the concertinaed top-hat from his scarred forehead and dumped his mud-bespattered length into an armchair by the hall fire. "I should say I *had* taken a toss. Catch me buying another nag from that infernal Pickie. Three hundred of the best I paid for that brute, and she never rose an inch. Not an inch, I tell you. He'll have to take her back. His Yankee

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friends may put up with being stuck. But I won't."

Naomi, handing her lord and master his tea, did not reply. The rib-fracture, though practically cured, had robbed her of an irretrievable fortnight, and the whole of that time Victor had been "impossible." He had been curt with the nurses, curter with the doctor, curtest of all with her new friends, the van Rensalders. Now Pickie's talent for horse-coping seemed to have completed his disgruntlement. Subconsciously comparing him, as he sat glowering into the dregs of his tea-cup, with the Master of Foxhounds from New England, she caught herself thinking: "No *American* husband would dare to behave like that," and blushed a little at the thought.

"Why the deuce Knossington doesn't give Pickie a decent allowance," groused Victor, "is beyond me. The fellow's turning into a regular horse-coper. I wouldn't mind so much if he'd confine his operations to his American friends, but when it comes to taking a cool three hundred out of *my* pocket——"

But at that, Naomi's indignation got the better of her. "There's nothing wrong with Pickie," she said, vehemently, "except that he happens to be rather hard-up, and there's nothing wrong with the van Rensalders except that they happen not to be. By the way, you haven't forgotten, have you, about their dance to-night?"

"No, I haven't forgotten." Victor's blue eyes scowled across the tea-table as he fingered his clipped moustache. "But I'm blest if I'm going to it. My head's quite bad enough as it is, without jazzing about till Heaven knows what time in the morning."

"Poor Mrs. van Rensalder!" Naomi, with a glance at the silver-gilt lantern-clock on the marble mantelpiece, rose as she spoke. "She'll be so disappointed. You know you promised her faithfully that we'd *both* turn up."

"Did I?" Lomondham, too, rose. "Well, even if I did, I'm not going."

"Why not?"

"Because it doesn't suit me."

"Oh, very well. I suppose I can go by myself."

The more Victor thought of it, the more the idea of Naomi's going to the van Rensalders' annoyed him; and when, duly attired for dinner, he faced her across the candle-lit table on which his pictured ancestors smiled down, stubborn as himself, from the gloomy gilt of their frames, his impulses were purely prehistoric. "*Their* wives," he mused, "wouldn't have dared leave them at home."

Nevertheless, various experiences with Naomi—they had already been married a full twelve months—had taught Victor the uselessness of prehistoric methods. To try to prevent his wife from going to the van Rensalders' dance would only produce a domestic explosion. And he was too tired for any form of explosion.

"I'll just read for an hour, and then turn in," he said, eyeing her moodily over the conjugal port.

"Do just as you like, dear," retorted Naomi.

Her ready acquiescence only added to his irritation. He told himself that she was too attractive, far too attractive, to go to dances unaccompanied by her husband.

And, indeed, that night, Naomi, thanks to her enforced rest, looked a perfect picture. A parure of brilliants tiaraed her dark head. Her dress, plum colour, heightened the creamy pallor of her cheeks. Her neck glistered lustrous as the pearls which circled it. Looking on her, Victor knew jealousy—the acute impersonal jealousy of the harem-man. He hated the thought that other males—males like van Rensalder—should dance with Naomi, should hold her in their arms. Perhaps, after all, he'd better not stop at home?

But to reverse his own decisions was not Victor Lomondham's way. Either she must reverse hers—or else go by herself.

"Damn it!" he thought, handing her gloved and fanned into the punctual limousine, "there's something to be said for marrying a plain woman."

III.

EVEN had they known about it, which, needless to say, they didn't, the van Rensalders would not have grudged the Earl of Knossington's hard-up eldest son the trifling commission which he extracted, as price of his good offices in securing their tenancy, from the equally hard-up possessors of Little Parbury Grange.

It was on the outer edge of the ballroom, already blaring to the music of an electric organ, and seething with fox-trotting fox-hunters, that Naomi, some twenty minutes after bidding her husband good-bye, shook hands with her palpitating hostess.

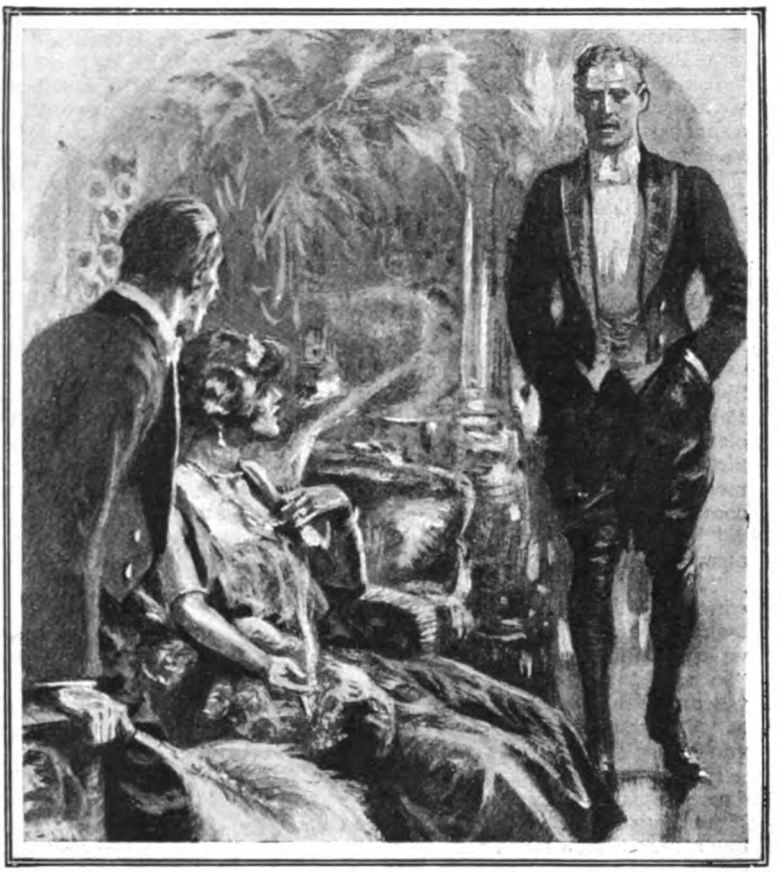
"Victor's so sorry he couldn't come," prevaricated Naomi, waving her plum-coloured fan. "He took a bit of a toss this afternoon, you know, so I've sent him to bed."

"Now, isn't that too bad?" Mrs. van Rensalder, a full and fulsome blonde, who shared a greater woman's opinion that fox-hunters were "nasty ditch-jumping fellows," parted ripe lips in a ripe smile. "I do hope *he* hasn't fractured anything."

"Only his hat," laughed Naomi; and drifted away. Fond as she was of Victor, it

was a distinct relief —just for once—to have left him at home. Besides, the sheer joy of being up and about again (had not Dr. Hartley himself promised that she might hunt half a day on the morrow ?) more than compensated for any husband's defection.

Fortuitously, she danced her first dance with Pickie. Pickie, his face wrinkling like a fox-terrier's, "couldn't believe, honestly couldn't believe, that the nag he sold Victor could have put anybody down." Pickie, surveying the ballroom with a guest-coping eye, decided that "everybody had turned up." Pickie, with his malicious whisper, "If Martin S. wasn't such a sportsman, blowed if I wouldn't charge him a bob a nob for his guests," drove the last thought of Victor from Naomi's mind.



It seemed just possible that he intended to pass from caressing the fan to caressing her hand. At which precise moment Victor arrived, showing no trace of the mental struggle which had culminated in the reversal of his decision to stay at home.

The wine and the gossip cheered her still further. She began to feel herself, for the first time since her wedding-day, the centre of attraction. Various old-time suitors, seeing her without Victor, made tentative advances. Repelling those advances, she became the old Naomi—a trifle flirtatious, a trifle acrid in flirtation. Then, just as she was savouring this freedom of married-womanhood to the full, van Rensalder, his duties as a host accomplished, insisted that she "sit down and take supper" with him.

Except for his perfect teeth, there was nothing typically transatlantic about van Rensalder. Hunting notoriously keeps its devotees young; and the American, with the adaptability of his race, had lapped up the youthfulness of this new sport as a tom-cat laps cream.

"You people make me feel like a schoolboy," he explained.

"You look just like one," countered Naomi, wanting—almost—to mother him.

THAT evening, however, van Rensalder needed more than mothering. Social success, as more particularly typified by the presence of the Screever Castle house-party, had gone to his American head; with the result that, without actually making love to Naomi, he did, in a peculiarly subtle way which exactly suited her temperament, suggest that the slightest encouragement would see him up and courting. He insisted that she "take just one more glass of wine," that she should dance with him. They danced together. One dance. Two dances.

Other people besides Naomi had been drinking champagne; and with the departure of the Screever Castle crowd the atmosphere of the ballroom grew a trifle reckless. She danced with van Rensalder

again. Pickie—his hostess in his arms—flung them a pert, "Don't *you* be jealous, van Rensalder, or I'll tell Lomondham." "Tommy" Raydon, meeting them as they went arm-in-arm out of the ballroom, down a short steam-heated corridor into a Moorish-looking alcove, whispered a malicious, "Don't forget you're a married woman, Naomi."

They sat them down in the alcove and lit cigarettes.

"Marriage," began van Rensalder, as though carrying on "Tommy" Raydon's thoughts, "is a mighty difficult business. Mrs. van Rensalder, now, doesn't feel the same way about fox-hunting that I do. She'd rather pass the winter at Miami or Palm Beach. So it's just possible"—he glanced sideways at Naomi, and all sorts of flirtatious possibilities flickered for a moment behind the blue of his eyes—"that I'll come over by myself next year."

"Without your daughters?" Naomi's answer was utterly non-committal.

"Surely. But I'm not absolutely certain whether I'll come or no. You see"—he looked at her again, and this time there was no mistaking the meaning of the look—"it would just depend on what kind of welcome I'd be apt to receive."

"I'm sure you'd be very welcome, Mr. van Rensalder."

It was all very innocent, the merest dance-flirtation; yet underlying it, for Naomi, lay thrill. If Victor chose to behave like a bear with a sore head, he must expect—this kind of thing.

Van Rensalder, suddenly silent, took up her big ostrich-feather fan and began to stroke it caressingly with his long fingers. It seemed just possible that he intended to pass from caressing the fan to caressing her gloved hand. She drew her hand out of reach. Her eyes, however, held the message: "You can say anything you like, but you mustn't touch." He answered the message aloud: "Should I be welcome—to you?"

At which precise moment there arrived down the corridor Victor—Victor perfectly turned-out, his composed features showing no trace of the mental struggle which had culminated in the reversal of his decision to stay at home.

"Evening, van Rensalder," said the newcomer. "Sorry I couldn't get here before."

"Sir Victor, this is an unexpected pleasure."

"Hallo, Vic! When did you turn up?"

The American's greeting was only the barest shade too effusive; Naomi's perfect. Nobody, watching the three of them return to the ballroom, could have guessed the situation, let alone its possibilities. Yet the situation—Naomi felt—existed; and Pickie's fatuous, "It's about time you did put in an appearance, Vic. Naomi's been flirting with van Rensalder all the evening," did not improve it.

"Then it's a good thing I came." Victor countered Pickie's remark easily enough. Inwardly, though, he was seething. That "damned Yankee" had no business to sit out with Naomi—no business to stroke her fan.

Mrs. van Rensalder, rushing up with a "Now, *that's* what I call a dutiful husband," complicated matters still further. "Dutiful, indeed!" thought the now thoroughly outraged baronet. "I suppose she thinks I like turning out in the middle of the night."

To relieve himself, he turned on Pickie, and began to upbraid him about the mare.

"Nerve—I call it—describing that kind of animal as a good hunter."

"Put you down, didn't she?" Pickie's eyes were a trifle too bright, his demeanour a trifle too confident. "Naomi told me something of the sort. First time out, too. Rotten luck!"

"Luck be sugared." Victor, one hand on Pickie's arm, steered him willy-nilly out of female earshot. "She's as green as grass—hasn't got a notion of the game."

"She's been hunted two seasons."

"Where?"

"In Oxfordshire."

"Oxfordshire!" sniffed Lomondham.

"Well"—Pickie jingled a pair of coins in his trouser-pocket—"all I can say is that I don't understand it. I've ridden her myself and she never put *me* down. She takes a bit of handling, of course. I mean—you have to put her at 'em."

"My dear boy," Victor laughed—the laugh of the badly-stung—"that may go down with your American friends, but it doesn't go down with me. *I* can't afford three hundred for a covert-hack—even to oblige you. You'll have to take her off my hands."

"Take her back?" Sheer financial panic wiped the brightness from Pickie's eyes.

"Yes. Take her back. Why not?"

"But there's nothing wrong with her. She's sound."

"I don't dispute that. What I do dispute is that she's a good hunter. A good hunter, let me remind you, is a horse that's capable of being hunted. She isn't. If you don't believe me, ride her yourself and see."

"When?" Pickie, who had spent the three hundred, leaped at the chance of postponing the inevitable.

"Whenever you like. What about the day after to-morrow?"

"Can't. I've got to go up to town."

"Monday, then?"

"All right. Make it Monday."

"Good. I'll send her on to Pluckley Head."

Lomondham, his temper slightly assuaged, returned to Naomi, who said, as in duty bound, "I'm ready to go home whenever you are, Victor."

They bade the van Rensalders good-bye, and made their way to the car. Driving home, neither spoke. "I wonder exactly how much Victor saw," thought Naomi, guiltily. "I wonder why the devil he was stroking her fan," thought her husband.

IV.

IT was distinctly unfortunate that—a sharp and sudden frost having stopped the next day's hunting—van Rensalder, his imaginative temperament desiring re-assurance that Lady Lomondham had not taken him too seriously, utilized the idle afternoon to call on her. For the call re-aroused all the jealousy of which Victor was capable. "Mangy poodle-faker!" he thought, when the visitor departed.

By Saturday the bone was out of the ground. Rain, however, buckets and buckets of rain, deterred both Naomi and the "poodle-faker" from the saddle. Victor, returning soaked and sacrilegious about three o'clock, told his wife she "hadn't missed much"; and spent the evening discussing finance with his agent. "I wish he'd come out of his sulks," thought the perturbed Naomi. But Victor's sulks endured all through Sunday, when, lunching with Lady Kilmorton at Little Overdine, they encountered the van Rensalder family in full force. Even Monday, breaking sunlit and rainless, hardly dispelled them.

Over breakfast he warned Naomi "not to go playing the fool and smash herself up." Breakfast over, she heard him telephone Pickie: "I'll be on Mustard-Pot. If the mare's as good as you say she is, no doubt you'll be able to give me a lead."

Ten-forty-five brought their car to the door. Eleven-twenty saw them—with hardly a word spoken on the way—in the big courtyard at Pluckley farm-house, where Pickie, speckless in his white and scarlet, was already fiddling with the bay mare's bridle.

Lomondham greeted the fiddler with a terse: "Don't blame me if she breaks your neck"; allowed his stud-groom to mount Naomi on Silver Glory, and swung a long leg over Mustard-Pot's long back. "Sha'n't stand any nonsense from *you*," he whispered to the gigantic yellow gelding.

As the three of them walked their horses out of the farm-house gates and up the asphalted high-road to Pluckley Head, Naomi experienced none of her usual hunting-field exhilaration. It always made her more or less nervous to see Victor ride Mustard-Pot; and to-day, something told her, both Victor and the horse were in reckless mood. She herself, moreover, felt unusually shaky in the saddle. The set rib ached. Her knees seemed to have lost their grip.

"I think I'll give up riding astride," she said to Pickie.

Hounds, rippling out of a side-road, interrupted progress and conversation. "Look well, don't they?" commented an American voice at Naomi's bridle-elbow.

Van Rensalder was in his most youthful, most effusive mood. The eyes under his hat-brim glinted like a midshipman's. "Morning," he said to Victor. "That's some horse you're riding."

Lomondham admitted the excellence of Mustard-Pot, but omitted to return the "Good morning," and the four of them jig-jogged on after the pack till they made the long, irregular strip of woodland which crowns the brow of Pluckley Hill.

The field, for a Monday, was a large one; the Master, after three blank days, even keener than his huntsman; the weather, to all appearances, ideal for scent. The Pluckley Head foxes, however, lived up to their reputation, and refused to break.

"Never *do* get a run from here, confound it!" growled Lomondham, both hands hard on Mustard-Pot's curb, as the yellow gelding, who hated "messing about" quite as much as his master, played up like an angry stallion; and Naomi, overhearing, winced. Van Rensalder, still at her side, made some remark. She answered it tritely. Victor's temper—she knew suddenly—had as much to do with the American's presence as with the absence of foxes.

After a fruitless hour they gave up Pluckley Head and jig-jogged away, a long but still hopeful column, to Kilton Covert. But the Covert proved tenantless, and one o'clock of a bright afternoon saw Victor and Pickie munching sandwiches on the edge of Saxenham Heath, with never a fox found and never a fence leaped.

"Haven't had a chance to show you what she can do yet," said Pickie, still cheerful.

"Lucky for you," retorted Lomondham, grimly.

By now, what with the strain of preventing Mustard-Pot from bolting into covert, his annoyance with "that poodle-faker" for "riding about with my wife as though she were his own," his irritation at not finding a fox, and his thwarted desire to "put Pickie through it," the baronet was in the worst temper of his life. He told the chauffeur who had brought lunch to tell one of the

grooms to take his second horse home; re-mounted; and, spying Naomi still with the American, cantered up to them.

"Don't you think it's about time you chucked it, my dear?" ejaculated Naomi's husband, taking no notice of van Rensalder. "Hartley said you weren't to stay out all day."

"Silver Glory isn't a bit tired, and neither am I." Naomi smiled up at her lord and master, but there was little mirth behind the smile. Every instinct warned her that Victor was furious—reasonlessly, ravingly furious with van Rensalder. And it wasn't her fault. She had done her utmost, her politest utmost, to get rid of the man.

"It's no good waiting till you *are* tired," went on Victor. "The car's here."

"It can wait."

"I'd rather it didn't."

For a moment their eyes clashed. Then Naomi, suddenly submissive, dismounted, handed over Silver Glory to the second groom, and, with a wave of her hand to van Rensalder, stepped into the car. "If I'd stayed," she thought, "there'd only have been a row. And one mustn't have rows—not in front of strangers."

Motoring home, conscience reproached her again. She wished, remembering the hostility in Victor's eyes, that she had never even met, far less flirted with, van Rensalder.

V.

NAOMI'S husband, left alone with his aversion, felt his fingers itch on the handle of his hunting-whip. He knew that only Naomi's submissiveness had prevented him from making a scene—and the knowledge made him angrier than ever. The American—curse him!—seemed utterly oblivious of his own situation. He began to chatter, pleasantly, aimlessly, about his wife's dislike of hunting, about the bad luck of the day.

Victor, controlling himself, managed a few responsive monosyllables, and cantered back to his other aversion, Pickie. If only hounds could find—find quickly! If only he could give Mustard-Pot his head and get away—get away across country and forget both his aversions!

That afternoon, however, the "best little bitches in England" found never a fox; never the smell of one. Saxenham Thorns was blank as Saxenham Heath; Lornham Coppice blanker than either. The field dwindled and dwindled. By four o'clock, when, despairingly, Huntsman Rogers tried for an outlier in the fields below the Coppice, a bare two-dozen riders remained; and of these only one, Pickie, who had somehow lifted the bay mare over one or two unnecessary fences, felt even moderately happy.

"Sha'n't have to stump up that three hundred this evening, anyway," thought Pickie as—Rogers having failed to find his outlier—the Master signified his intention of applying the closure; and Victor, who had gone off to find groom and car, rode back, his face black as the cloud which had just appeared on the horizon, with the news that "the blighters must have lost their sanguinary way."

"What are you going to do—wait for 'em?" asked Pickie.

"Wait for 'em be sugared—it's going to pelt like blazes."

Without another word, Victor kicked Mustard-Pot to a canter; and Pickie, thanking his stars that the ordeal of the bay mare was at least postponed, followed him down the bridle-path towards Little Lomondham.

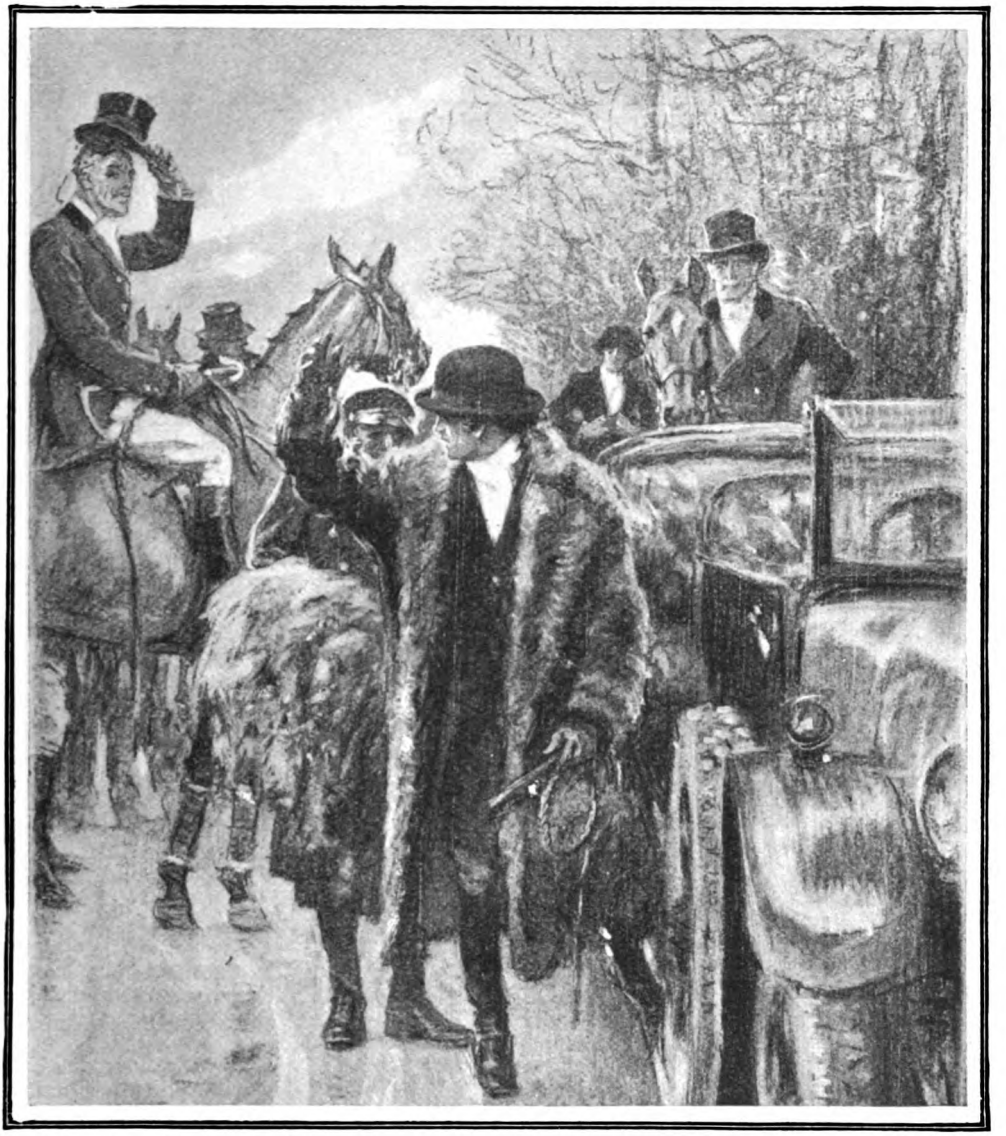
But that day the stars of Pickie's thanking were not in the ascendant: for van Rensalder, whose car had also failed at the rendezvous, seeing him canter off after Lomondham and knowing their direction the same as his own, decided instantly to add himself to the party. "Hi!" shouted van Rensalder. "Hi! Wait a second!"

Victor, looking back over his shoulder at that shout (for Mustard-Pot's idea of a canter differed from the bay mare's as a swallow's flight from a sparrow's), saw the man who had dared to flirt with his wife draw level with the man who had dared to stick him with a horse; and felt the devil enter into him at the seeing. Said the devil, logically enough as it seemed to his furious auditor: "Here's your chance to give Pickie a worse toss than he gave you—and show that poodle-faker what riding means into the bargain." Said the devil: "You give 'em a lead, Lomondham. Even if they don't follow—the laugh's yours."

Victor looked back once again; and coolly, pace by pace, eased Mustard-Pot, till the pair were within three horse-lengths. Then he shouted: "Come along, Pickie, my lad. Let's see who's right about the mare"; and, setting Mustard-Pot at the low cut-and-laid which separated the bridle-path from Lornham Big Field, jumped it in style. Pickie, perforce, followed him over; and van Rensalder's black, not to be outdone, did likewise. "Hades!" thought the unfortunate Pickie. "Now I'm for it."

As for van Rensalder, he didn't think at all. He knew, vaguely, that it wasn't "quite the thing" to lark home—even after the blankest of days; but if Lomondham wanted a lark, Lomondham should have his way.

And, obviously, Lomondham did want a lark. Lomondham held on—straight on for the fence at the lower end of Big Field. He began to gallop—to gallop like blazes. Pickie, too!



Naomi, suddenly submissive, dismounted and stepped into the car. "If I'd stayed," she thought, "there'd only have been a row. And one mustn't have rows—not in front of strangers."

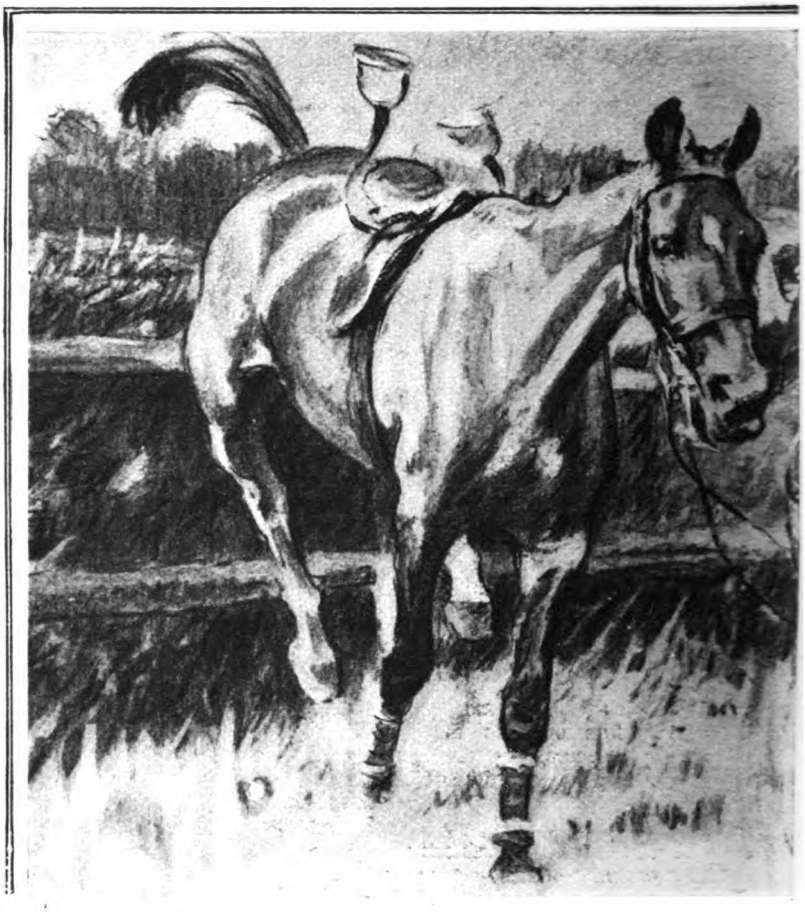
Van Rensalder tapped once with his whip; and his black, nothing loath, shot after the yellow and the bay.

They came, in echelon formation, to the fence. The yellow horse went over big; the bay somehow; the black like a stag. "Go on," said the devil in Victor. "Go on till you put one of 'em down."

But the gate of the next field stood open; and Mustard-Pot, wiser than his steersman, made for it before Victor could make up his mind to stop him.

FOLLOWED a mile of clean turf, flat as a billiard-table, over which the three horses, heads for home, flew like shells from field-guns. Followed three fences so easy that even the bay took them in her stride. Followed plough—another plough—then ridge-and-furrow. There was timber ahead. "Put 'em down," said the devil in Victor; "put 'em both down."

Pickie, however—his heart in his boots and his soul in his bank-book—managed to lift the bay across the post-and-rails.



"Damn!" thought Victor; for van Rensalder, too, had cleared the timber and was racing to draw level. "Damn the pair of 'em!"

His blood rose, so that, looking back, he saw their red coats through a red haze. Then, looking forward again, a field and a field ahead, he saw black murder. Mustard-Pot—thank the Lord!—was almost uncapsizable. Mustard-Pot, and only Mustard-Pot, could clear those double rails and the twenty-three feet of hedge-and-turf between 'em which all Leicestershire knows as——

And, "Horrors!" muttered Pickie. "Horrors! He's making for Old Scarlet's Jump."

But Pickie's blood, too, was up—and van Rensalder's—and even the bay mare's. Looking back once more, Victor saw them, not fifty yards behind, fence knee-to-knee in pursuit of him. Then, touching Mustard-Pot with the spur, he sat down and rode—rode to kill.

Ahead and below him—two-fifty—two hundred—a hundred yards down the slope—"Old Scarlet's Jump" showed broad as three sheep-pens. Beyond—a strip of green—lay the first of his own fields; and beyond that the road to the Hall. Along the road crawled a car, a car with a woman at its wheel. "*My* car," thought the galloping Lomondham. "Naomi! She came to fetch me." And at that thought the devil—suddenly as he had come in—went out of him.

Racing, hands down and head up, at "Old Scarlet's Jump," he knew himself for a fool. A mean and a jealous fool! A suicidal, murdering fool! He ought to stop Mustard-Pot; to stop Pickie, van Rensalder from breaking—as they surely must—their necks. But the near rail of Old Scarlet's Jump was a bare six horse-lengths ahead, and the spur-prick had sent Mustard-Pot crazy. Lomondham, turning head over shoulder and shouting, shouting at the top of his lungs: "Wire! 'Ware wire!" did what man could to retrieve his own folly. . . .

The rest was terror—a terror of titanic leaping—a terror of air on eyebrows—a terror of flying and falling, of earth up-ending sideways to smite one as one flew.

For that last turn of the head, made at the very instant Mustard-Pot gathered hocks under forehand for his enormous up-spring, had loosened Victor's grip from the saddle-flaps; so that, even before the bay crashed blind through the near rail and the black, short-leaping, twirled headlong at the far, he fell—fell like the veriest tyro—fell unhorsed as his safe horse landed. . . .

He fell—fell like the veriest tyro—fell unhorsed as his safe horse landed.

SECONDS later, Sir Victor Lomondham staggered upright. His head swam. His left elbow was fire and torment. The ground waved up and down before his eyes. Across that waving ground somebody—a woman—came running. He turned away from the woman to look, as men look in nightmares, on his devil's handiwork.

The bay mare lay dead, dead as mutton, between rail and rail. The black was away—away, reins dangling, after Mustard-Pot. But Pickie—Pickie, thank the Lord!—was safe. Safe—and on his feet—and cursing, cursing like one demented as he bent to lift van Rensalder's senseless body. "Between us we've killed him," he muttered.

With one last terrible effort, Lomondham mastered his swimming head. The woman—his woman—was close now. Very close. "Naomi!" he called, turning to her. "Naomi!"

"Victor!" she called back, running. "Victor. Are *you* hurt?"

"I?" She could see, even as she came breathless up to him, that his left arm hung broken in the coat-sleeve. "No. But the Yank is. Badly. Go for Hartley. Quick. On the way get men—some of our own men—a hurdle—blankets—brandy. And, Naomi——"

"Yes, dear?"

"Tell the men they're not to take him to the Grange. They're to take him to our place. They're to put him—to put him in my room." Victor tottered as he spoke, but his words were fierce, commanding. "In *my* room. Do you understand what I'm saying, Naomi? Then don't stand there like a fool—but go, go for Hartley."

VI.

"AND did she go?" I asked Mustard-Pot.

"Not she." The yellow horse wrinkled up his lips in the semblance of a grin. "She didn't care what happened to that Yank. However, when Driver saw *me* come into stables without Lomondham he knew there must be trouble somewhere. So they had two more cars out and Hartley on the telephone before you could say 'Jack Robinson.'"

"And Hartley"—Silver Glory finished the tale with her grey ears flat to her grey skull—"Hartley, confound him, doctored *both* the criminals back to life."

May I commend that word "criminal," with the compliments of the season, to the notice of all such as may be tempted to lark home after a bad day's hunting?

Chinese Horses

by

HUGH WALPOLE

ILLUSTRATED BY E.G.OAKDALE

MISS HENRIETTA MAXWELL, when she was about thirty-five years of age, suffered suddenly from misfortune. She had been for many years quite alone in the world, an only child whose parents had been killed in a carriage accident when she was ten years of age. Then she had acquired an almost masculine independence and self-reliance. Until lately things had gone well with her. Without being rich, she had had, until that fatal August of 1914, quite enough to live upon. She had taken a house in St. John's Wood, not far from Lord's, with an adorable garden, panelled dining-room, and a long music-room at the back. She had soon loved this house so much, so deeply, that she had bought it. Then, when the war came, she threw herself completely into it, nursed in France, worked with desperate seriousness and the severity of a Brigadier-General over those whom she commanded. Towards the end of 1917 she broke down, had insomnia, came back to England to rest, found it a much longer business than she had expected, and was not really her old self again until after the Armistice. Perhaps she would never be her old self again. Before the war she had not known what nerves were. Now she knew very well.

Then Miss Maxwell discovered that her finances were queer. In the first place it cost twice as much to live as it had done. Her little staff of three were loyal and affectionate, but they had to be fed. Some investments into which she was led by a kindly but rather feckless friend had done anything but well. She was warm-hearted, and hated to refuse the adorable spare bedroom to a friend, with the result that there was always someone coming or going. People dropped in for meals in the jolliest and most unexpected way. There was nothing that she loved so much as to hear people praise the house. Some of the praise she knew was insincere, but every now and then she heard that real catch in the throat, the "Oh, my dear, but it's lovely!" when the first glimpse was caught of the corner of the library with the long windows looking out on to the trees, the dark blue ceiling, the white bookshelves, the gold mirror, and the very best picture she had, a lovely Clausen water-colour—cottages, a silver-grey pool, and faintly blue hills. In her own heart of hearts she thought that nobody's books looked quite so perfect in their shelves as did hers. They seemed to like the room that they were in. They wanted to show her that they did, and there was so much sun in that library that, although their backs might be dimmed just a little, their hearts were thoroughly warm, and some of the most cynical books in the world became quite amiable and kindly from living in that particular corner of that library. In fact, after reading Stendhal one winter very seriously, she moved him, bag and baggage, from the rather chilly corner by the door and put him in the sun-drenched spot near the window, and hoped it would do him good.

She adored the house, every nook and cranny of it, from the basement, which ought to have been dark and was not, up to the two little rooms at the top, which were so hot in fine weather that nobody could sleep there and so cold in the winter that you had to wear a fur coat when you went into them. But the house on the whole was of a fine temperature, and it had a way of always keeping one warm room on a cold day, and one really cool one in the height of the summer, so that it surprised you. In fact it looked after you, and seemed to take the greatest care that it should have as few dilapidations as possible. Best of all was its colour. Miss Maxwell adored the colour. She said, what was true enough, that there were a great many grey days in London, and that you couldn't have too much orange, too much purple, and too many burning reds. That is not to say that she went in for all the eccentric colours of which people are so fond to-day, so that you do your dining-room in black and orange, and for the first month it looks like the back-cloth of an Eastern musical

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comedy, and the second month it looks like the shop of a decorator who is not quite able to make both ends meet, and the third month it looks so shabby and dusty that you have to change all its colours and start over again. No, she was not eccentric. She had silver-grey wallpapers and white bookcases. Then she had also certain things she had found abroad: some bronzes, two splendid Chinese horses, some Japanese prints, some Spanish shawls, and upstairs, in a little dressing-room next her bedroom, a beautiful little collection of English pottery. All these things she adored with a personal, individual adoration. She didn't understand the people to whom possession meant nothing at all. The Chinese horses and a Wedgwood bowl and two Jane Austen first editions and the Clausen picture were quite as personal to her as certain of her friends; a great deal more personal than most of her acquaintances. But all these things were sunk in the final, adorable charm of the house itself. The house was her friend, her counsellor, her consoler in distress, her doctor when she was ill, her companion when she couldn't sleep, someone who loved her and was intensely grateful for her own love. All this she felt when the horrible time came when she suddenly had to let the house and leave it because she couldn't afford to live there until times were better.

SHE was successful in her let; that is, she discovered a very pretty girl who loved the house at first sight, who was apparently quiet and orderly, who didn't keep dogs and didn't care for dancing (so she said). She was so pretty, this Miss March, that it really was charming to see her in the house. She was ready also to take on the little staff of three, and she told Miss Maxwell that she would be delighted to see her whenever she liked to call. The actual leaving the house, therefore, was not so terrible as Miss Maxwell had expected. It was horrible, of course, but Miss Maxwell went down to Eastbourne, sat beside the sea, and thought about that pretty creature moving in and out, up and down, and counted the months until things would be better, her investments would go up, and she would be able to go back again.

That was at first, but gradually, day by day, she felt more and more that the house was longing for her. She suddenly, on the wildest spur of the moment, when she was shopping and was intending to go back to her lodging and have her lunch, took a train up to London instead, walked through the dusky afternoon to St. John's Wood, looked through the little gates, rang the bell, asked if Miss March were at home, was told by a severe-looking woman that she was not, and crept back to Eastbourne again. The sight of the severe-looking woman made things very much worse. What had happened to the dear little house-parlourmaid who loved everything in the house quite as much as Miss Maxwell? This woman evidently loved nothing and nobody. She wrote to Miss March and received a rather stiff little letter in return saying that the staff had been added to, that one of the water-pipes had burst, and that a sister of Miss March had caught a severe cold by sleeping in the little room under the roof. Miss Maxwell, feeling exactly as though she had had a daughter who had gone to her first ball and been found by a number of people to be plain and awkward, came up to London and saw Miss March. The girl didn't seem so pretty as she had been. She was discontented and pouted. St. John's Wood was such a long way from everywhere, and she did hope that she hadn't mislaid any of the books, but one never knew what a friend would do when one's back was turned, and it was strange how little conscience people had about books, anyway. Some strange people came in to tea while Miss Maxwell was there; loud, noisy people who cared nothing, Miss Maxwell was certain, for beautiful things, probably laughed at the Chinese horses and thought books were stuffy. The end of this was that Miss Maxwell took two little rooms just round the corner—poky little rooms with a slatternly landlady, but from their windows you had a view of the house, could look right into the garden, and even, if you hung out far enough, could see into the library. Here Miss Maxwell planted herself and waited.

WE all know what obsessions can be, and there is nothing stranger in life than the very little distance that is needed to lend enchantment. Miss Maxwell had always adored her house, but seen as it was now, in fragments, with a coloured lawn, a brick wall, and several trees defending it, it was magical. Try as she would, Miss Maxwell could not concentrate upon anything else. The house protested. Of course it did. It was reproaching Miss Maxwell every minute of its poor life for allowing it to fall into such unsympathetic hands. It could do nothing: it could only protest and wait for the day of its deliverance, and the best that Miss Maxwell could do was to wait as near to it as possible.

After a while, when summer came down upon London and all the trees were rich and full, and flowers were scenting the by-ways of St. John's Wood, Miss Maxwell became afraid of her obsession. "You

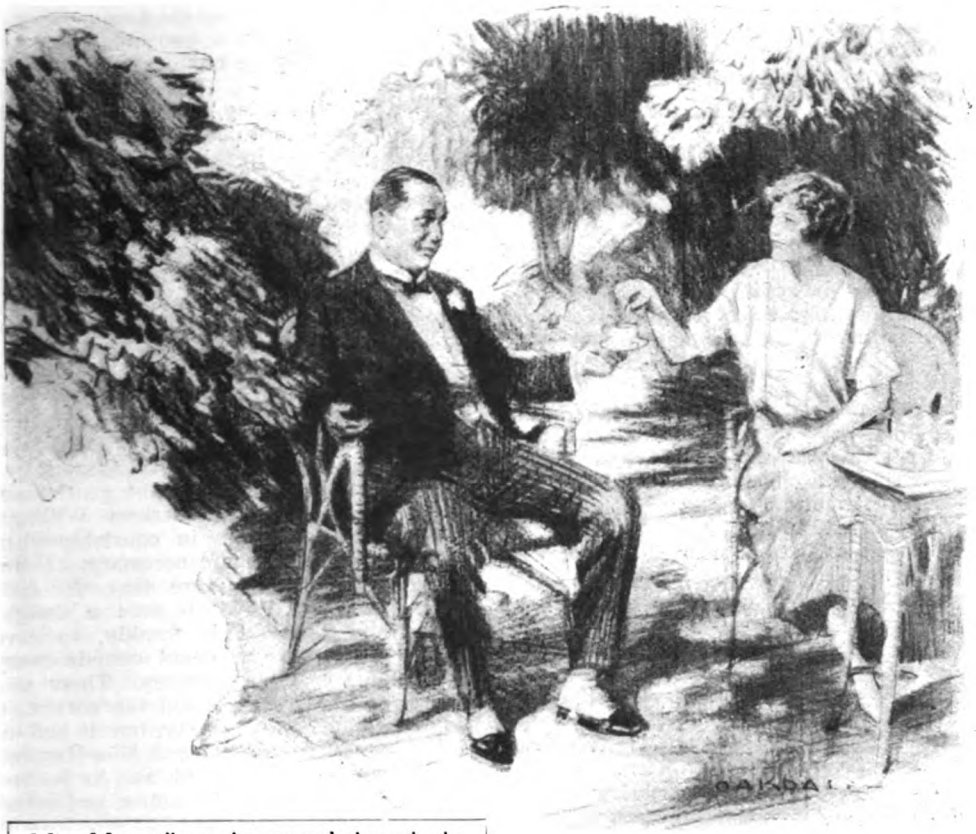
are really getting queer," she said to herself one evening as she looked at herself in the glass, "and must look out or you will be doing something silly." What she had been doing that afternoon was practically to press her nose against the railings and look through a rather dusty laurel into the garden beyond. There, in the garden, very pretty in a pink summer frock, was Miss March, giving tea to a rather stout gentleman with a round face like a moon. Miss Maxwell, as she peered through, soon discovered two things—one that the gentleman with the moon face was rich, and another that he was in love with Miss March. She judged the first because of his clothes, his self-satisfied air, and his gestures, which were as though he was scattering gold upon the grass and didn't mind if the sparrows ran away with most of it. For the other, there could be no mistake. His eyes, as Miss Maxwell told herself, were liquid with love, and when Miss March very daintily gave him some sugar in his tea he didn't look at the sugar at all, but only at Miss March, which, in a gentleman who was quite obviously fond of his food, was proof positive.

That evening, having a gay old woman to supper, she discussed the affair, and the first thing that the gay old woman said was: "Why, my dear, if he's rich and in love with that young woman, he'll soon propose to her, she will accept him, and then leave the house."

"Why should they leave the house?" asked Miss Maxwell, her heart beating fast at the mere idea.

"Why, you don't suppose," said the gay old woman, "that a man who's rich and fat will live in a poky little house in St. John's Wood! Oh, my dear, I beg your pardon," she went on; "of course I don't mean 'poky.' Of course it's a jewel of a house, but not the thing for married people, who will have motor-cars and large dinner-parties, and possibly an aeroplane or two."

This idea was terrific. The one thought that Miss Maxwell had was that Miss March



Miss Maxwell, as she peered through the railings, soon discovered that the gentleman was in love with Miss March.

should leave the house. She didn't in the least mind at the moment who took it next. It might be herself. A rich old uncle in South Africa might die, or shares go up, or she herself might discover a new sort of radium, or the heavens might fall. The great thing was for Miss March to go.

"Do you think," said the gay old woman, "that he has proposed to her yet?"

"Oh, no," said Miss Maxwell. "The way she was giving him sugar proved that. If he had proposed, she would have been much less interested. I am quite sure that she wants him to propose."

"Well, then," said her friend, "if she wants him to propose, and he's in love with her, there you are then."

THE next stage in this story was that Miss Maxwell actually met and spoke to the stout gentleman. She was always hanging about the little leafy street that ran past the gate of her house, and one afternoon, about six, the gentleman suddenly came out of the gate in a great hurry, his face rather flushed, ran straight into her, and nearly knocked her down. He was dreadfully distressed about this.

Miss Maxwell laughed in her frank, charming way.

"Harm? No, I should think not," she said. "I'm very glad to have met you."

"Glad to have met me?" he stammered, looking very foolish.

"Yes," she said, "because, as a matter of fact, that is my house. You have been going into it a great deal lately. I love it more than anything else on earth. I had to let it, but I simply hated doing it. I'm always wondering how it's getting on, and now you can tell me."

"How it's getting on?" he repeated. He was obviously one of those gentlemen to whom new ideas come rather slowly. "Why, it's all right, I think."

"Do you go into it much?" she asked.

They were by this time quite unconsciously walking down the road together.

"Do you go up to the very top of it and

down to the very bottom of it? Are the Chinese horses all right? Of course, I ought to have put them away, and the Wedgwood, and a lot of the books, but I simply couldn't bear that the house should be without them. I did send Jane Austen to the bank."

"Send Jane Austen to the bank?" he repeated. He was gazing at her with admiration. He was obviously a gentleman on whom the other sex made a strong appeal.

"Yes, my first editions of her. They are very good and worth a great deal of money, but they're worth much more to me. Any amount of coin. You don't collect first editions, I suppose?"

"Well, no, not exactly," he said, stammering.

"How do you mean 'not exactly'?" said Miss Maxwell, sharply. "You either collect first editions or you don't. You can't do it half and half."

"No; I see what you mean," he answered, laughing. "That was stupid of me. But I am stupid."

She liked that. It was extraordinary how intimate you could become with some people in a very short time.

"You like Miss March very much, don't you?" she said.

"How do you know that?" he asked, blushing. He blushed very often.

"I saw you having tea with her on the lawn," she answered. "I looked through the railings."

"Yes, I do like her very much. She is very pretty. I'm thinking of asking her to be my wife. I want a wife," he went on, confidentially, just as though he had said he wanted a new hat. "I'm forty-two, and have been a widower for seven years, and every year it has been more and more difficult."

"What has?" she asked him.

"Being a widower," he answered.

"That's not a very good reason for marrying Miss March," she said.

"Oh, but I do like her most immensely," he answered. "She's so pretty and kind!"

"Pretty she is," said Miss Maxwell. "What you have to ask yourself is as to whether she will be kind when she's hooked you. There's such a difference before and after."

"Hooked me?" He stopped. They were near St. John's Wood Road station. "What a horrible idea!"

"Well, of course she wants to marry you," said Miss Maxwell. "Very soon she'll not be as young as she is now, and you're rich, and I should think good-natured."

"How do you know so much about me?" he asked, staring at her in amazement.

"I'm observant," said Miss Maxwell.

"I should just think you are!" he said, looking at her, quite obviously ablaze with admiration.

"Tell me one thing," said Miss Maxwell. "If you propose to her and she marries you, will you live in this house?"

"I should think not. As it is, she says it's too small for her, and miles away from anywhere."

"Too small for her and miles away from anywhere!" Miss Maxwell retorted, indignantly. "She is no more worthy of that house than she is of you! However, I hope she'll marry you," she added.

ON that they parted, and it was quite astonishing how often afterwards they met. And yet it was perhaps not altogether astonishing, for Miss Maxwell was so often in that road, and the gentleman, whose name was Mr. Herbert Willings, had reached that stage in courtship when very frequent visits are necessary. Moreover, he had that nature that demands a sympathetic friend. It was a delight to him, he confessed it frankly, to have someone to whom he could confide every stage of his courting progress. There was a little public garden round the corner, a very small one and a dusty, but it had in it a bench, and upon this bench Miss Maxwell and Mr. Willings used to sit, and he poured out to her his longings, his hopes, and asked her endless questions as to what she thought about Miss March's character. Because, after all, he was forty-two, and behind his ardour was a natural middle-aged caution. He didn't, he confided to Miss Maxwell, want to make a mistake this time, from which she inferred that his first marriage had not been a complete success.

She herself was pulled in two opposite directions. She was as certain as she had ever been of anything that Miss March would make him very miserable. She had a kind of tenderness for him, he was so childish and so naïve, and she really didn't want him to be miserable for the rest of his days, as he undoubtedly would be if he married Miss March. On the other hand, it might be good for him to be less comfortable, less stout, and have to face for once the realities of life. And then she wanted him to marry, she wanted it terribly. She tried to make him understand a little what she felt about the house. She made him pay special visits to various rooms into which it was quite evident Miss March had not intended him to enter. She asked him all sorts of questions about the hang of the curtains, whether the carpets were brushed, how many pieces of china had been broken, and he was caught once by Miss

March counting the cups and saucers behind the glass case in her bedroom, and this, as he told Miss Maxwell, made her extremely angry. He had never seen Miss March angry before, and quite frankly he hadn't liked it. Miss Maxwell soon perceived that he would never have her feelings about the house. He simply didn't understand those things. A picture, if it had plenty of colour, wasn't bad on a wall, and a row of books, were they nicely bound, looked pleasant in a bookcase. He had to confess that he didn't read very much himself, but liked a good detective story when he was sleepy after a hard day's work. He thought the Chinese horses rather absurd, and treated her to quite a long lecture on the Yellow Peril, and how just at present Europe was all in pieces. It was the time we had to look out. He was very serious about this, and stared at her in amazement when she said that if only the Yellow Peril brought her another pair of Chinese horses she wouldn't mind very much what happened to Europe. The weeks advanced, and at last the time arrived when he intended to propose. He asked her advice very often as to the proper time and place in which to make his venture. She told him that in her opinion nothing was better than tea-time on the lawn, the shadows stealing across the grass, sparrows twittering, flowers sleepily closing their eyes, and plenty of little pink cakes on the table. And then as fate and the English climate would have it, the rain came down. Although it was July, it was as cold as December. Tea on the lawn was impossible, and a whole ten days went by when Mr. Willings had so nasty a cold that proposing was a physical impossibility. Then the fine day came.

MISS MAXWELL knew very well that the day had arrived. When she saw the sun splashing across her carpet in the early morning, the first thing that she said to herself was, "Now he'll propose to her to-day."

They had come, without spoken word, to a kind of agreement that they would meet in the little dusty park on most fine days somewhere around five in the afternoon; that is to say, if she were free she would go, and if he were free he would go, without any very definite agreement, and it was surprising how often accident led them in the same direction.

To-day, on this perfectly lovely afternoon, about half-past five, she was sitting on the bench watching the sparrows and waiting with terrific emotion for his appearance. She was sure that he would come to-day. To-day of all days he would need a confidant, someone into whose sympathetic ear he could pour every word of the wonderful occasion. Had she a sympathetic ear? She was not so sure. She felt in some mysterious way guilty. They would not be happy together. There was not the least chance of it. Miss March would lead him such a dance as Miss Maxwell trembled to contemplate. But what did that matter, compared with the house? After all, it was their own affair and not hers. She was not their friend, or, at least, only very slightly. As she sat there, she realized that what was happening on this wonderful afternoon was that the house was being given back to her. He must propose, and she must accept him, and they, being engaged, released the house. It was as simple as an easy sum in algebra. The house being released, in some way or another she would hold on to it. She couldn't see now in what way that would be, but never again, she swore, would she let it be delivered over to the mercies of an unsympathetic tenant. After all, she could live in one of the small rooms at the top of the house on bread and cheese, and open the other rooms one after another as her investments went up. She could feast her eyes on the Chinese horses, the darlings, and go over the house at night, touching the pictures with her hands, listening to every piece of furniture as it whispered to her "Good night," see the ghostly gleam of the china, hear the faint rustle of the curtains against the half-open window.

There was a step. She looked up. There was Mr. Willings, more flushed in the face than usual, greatly agitated. He sat down beside her, and then to her surprise, instead of bursting into a torrent of explanation, he said nothing.

"Well?" she broke in, at last.

He still said nothing.

"Tell me that she's accepted you!" she cried. "And then give me all the details."

"She hasn't accepted me."

"She hasn't?"

"No."

"Good heavens, what a fool!" Miss Maxwell, in her agitation, turned full upon him. "You don't mean to tell me she's refused you? Why, it's exactly what she wants. She won't get such another chance in a hundred years. She's going off. She's got some money, of course, but not nearly enough, and you're so kind."

Her expressions were mixed, but her meaning was clear.

"She hasn't refused me."

"She hasn't refused you?"

"No."

"Nor accepted you?"

"No."

"Then she's going to wait and think it over?"

"No, not that either."

"Then—— Good heavens, Mr. Willings, tell me what you mean. I can't endure the suspense any longer."

"What I mean is simple enough."

His expressi was almost sulky as he turned towards ner.

"What I mean is that I haven't proposed."

Miss Maxwell was so bitterly disappointed that she could say nothing.

"I haven't proposed," he went on, doggedly, "and I don't intend to. I'm never going to propose. I don't love her. I don't want her to be my wife."

Miss Maxwell rose bravely out of her disappointment. Curiosity held her again.

"You're not going to propose, and you don't love her? You loved her that day all right when I pressed my nose against the railings. I could see your love oozing out all over the lawn from behind miles of shrubbery. How can you change so quickly?"

"I might have loved her," he said, his face bright crimson, "if I hadn't run into you in the road; but you can't love two people at once, or I can't."

She was too utterly amazed to do anything but gasp.

"Why, man, you don't mean to say——?" she began.

"Yes, I do," he went on, staring at her. "I fell in love with you after the very first day, and it's gone on increasing ever since. How can a chit of a thing like that compare with you, with your wisdom and your kindness, and your fun, and—and—your beauty?"

"My beauty?" said Miss Maxwell.

"Yes, your beauty," he said, stammering in his agitation. "You're the most beautiful woman I've ever seen. Your quiet grey eyes——"

"Oh, please, Mr. Willings!"

Miss Maxwell wanted to laugh, looked at the piteous, dog-like expression in his large round eyes, and was touched with tenderness.

"Now do think for a moment. Here we are in a dusty little park in St. John's Wood and we're both middle-aged and nothing could make us romantic any longer. There is a beautiful young girl with all her life in front of her. I'm a withered old thing and you know it in yourself. Besides, I'm in love with somebody else."

His face fell so it was tragic to see.

"In love with somebody else?"

"Yes, with my house. I can't think of anything or anybody but my house."

"Why, then, don't you see," he cried, triumphantly, "you shall have your house. We'll turn that girl out of it and you shall live in it for the rest of your days. You'll have to put up with me, of course, but I'll do my best not to be in the way."

THEY were both such charming people that a small sparrow who had been hopping about in a businesslike fashion on the path stopped for a moment and looked at them in sheer admiration, with his head on one side.

The dazzling vision blinded her. She didn't love him; no, not the least little bit. She looked at him, even in that moment of amazement, quite clearly and dispassionately, and saw how fat and bald he would be, even in another five years, and heard him snore in his sleep, and felt his heavy tread as he came towards her when she was tired and inquired solicitously whether she wanted anything, and saw the silly smile of happy satisfaction in his face when he bought her a new hat, and perceived precisely his air of touching proprietorship as he walked across a well-filled restaurant towards the table that he had so carefully chosen. She saw all this, but she saw on the other hand quite clearly a life of ease and affluence, no more struggles, no more watching your shares go down, no more wondering what she could do to get a new dress without paying for it, and, above all, the house, the house, the house—hers for ever and ever. Yes, but his too. He didn't care for the house; he would pretend to, but he would never be able to hide it from her. Nevertheless, she was deeply touched.

"I can't tell you," she said, "what a compliment you've paid me. We'll be friends always, won't we, whatever happens?"

His face fell directly.

"Oh, I know what it means when you say that," he said. "I don't want us to be friends. I want you to marry me."

"But I don't love you!"

"You will grow to care for me," he said. "I'm sure you will. I'll be ever so patient."

How many thousands upon thousands of people had said those very words before! How many thousands of people were probably saying those words at that very moment throughout the world!

She looked at him, looked away, said at last: "Give me a week. We won't meet for a week, nor write, nor anything at all. Be here this same time to-day week, rain or shine, and I will give you my answer, but remember, whatever my answer is, that I shall never forget how kind you have been. I shall always be grateful."

She got up then and left him.

THERE followed the most critical week of her life. She sat in her little room, looking over at the garden, and fought her severest battle. No one would ever propose to her again. Of that she was quite

"Tell me that she's accepted you!" she cried. "And then give me all the details."

sure. There was very little prospect that, left alone by herself, life would ever become very easy. Life was not very easy any more to middle-aged women with very small incomes and no talents. She would struggle and struggle and struggle, and later on perhaps

ill-health would come. She would be alone in the world and the grim finale was more than she, however brave she might be, could fully contemplate. He would always be kind, much too kind. She would dominate him utterly. He would do everything she told him. When she was cross (and sometimes she was very cross indeed) he would be sorry and go out and buy her something and beg her pardon for some fault that she herself had committed. There would always be somebody to look after her. When she was ill there would be every attention. They would go abroad and see the world. Most of all, she would not only live in the house but she would be able to do things to it, make it perfect and beautiful and wonderful, give it all the little attentions that it needed, help it and strengthen it and make it lovely, and at last die in it.

Yes, but he would be there. Every moment of their life together he would be misunderstanding the house. She would never, never be able to make him see it. However strongly she dominated him, she would never prevent his personality from pervading it, and the inevitable moment would surely come when she would implore him to leave it and probably find that the only thing to do was for them both to go and live somewhere else.

COMMON-SENSE readers of this little story will say at once that it is fantastically impossible. No middle-aged spinster with no future would surrender a comfortable, safe, and assured life for such a reason. It was not fantastic to Miss Maxwell. The beauty of that house was the test for her of all the beauty in the world, the only test, and it had to be kept pure and immaculate, and if it were not so the colour of the world would change. Nothing would ever be quite immaculate again. That was a terrible week. She sat at her window, looking over at the house, struggling, thinking first one thing and then another. Then one evening, just the day before she was to meet him again, a marvellous thing happened. It was a lovely summer evening, with a half moon, crocus coloured, rising ever so gently into the faint blue sky. She suddenly determined that she would go and see Miss March. She rang the bell and stood waiting, trembling with excitement. The horse-faced servant opened the door. Miss March was out. Might Miss Maxwell go just for a moment to the room at the top of the house and look for a little box that she had left there and forgotten? The servant hesitated and then yielded. Through the rooms Miss Maxwell went. They were soaked with the evening light, the light through which she loved most to see them. The whole house cried out with protest as she went. Ugly things lay everywhere, hideous new novels with bright yellow labels. In the dining-room the remains of a horrible meal not yet cleared away. In the beautiful little blue-walled drawing-room there was a loathsome Pekingese that whimpered at her like a child as she entered. And the bedroom—the mess that it was! Even the horse-faced servant felt something of this and said that it was wonderful how perpetually on the move Miss March had been, and what with dancing all night and entertaining people all day it was a wonder that she kept her complexion as she did. In the little room at the top of the house there was desolation. No one had touched it for months. It was dusty and neglected and forlorn. Miss Maxwell looked out of the little attic window and saw the moon and the pale green sky and the dark trees coming up to her like old friends from the dusky garden. She leaned out and forgot everything. Her hands pressed on the little wooden sill. Her eyes filled with repentant tears. She heard the servant's voice.

"I'm thinking Miss March won't be here much longer," the servant said. "She is considering giving up the rest of the lease, she tells me. It don't suit her. Too far out for 'er friends. I'm sure I don't wonder," she ended, with a sniff.

Miss Maxwell turned round, her heart beating with joy.

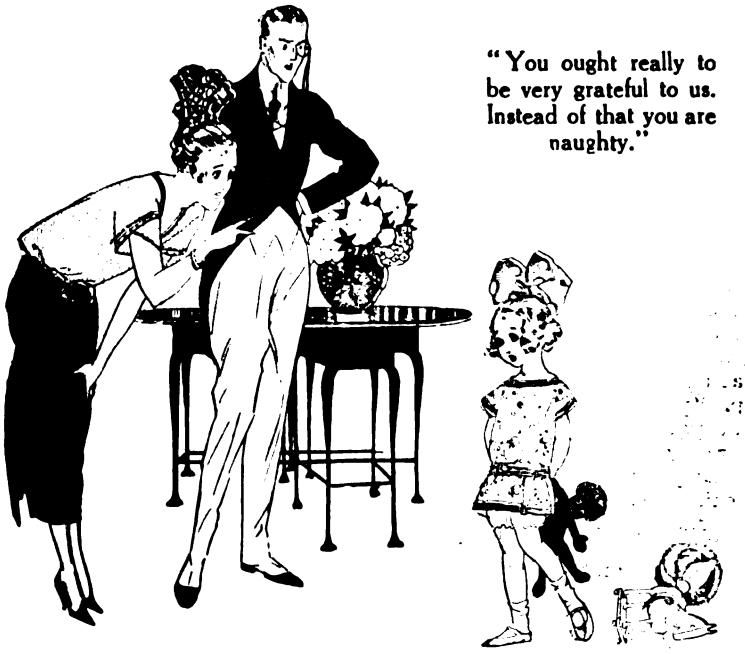
"*'Tis* too far out for her," she cried, triumphantly. "It's not the house for her at all. She doesn't understand it."

The servant looked at Miss Maxwell with a stern pity.

"Maybe, miss," was all she said.

As they went downstairs the house seemed to gather around them and Miss Maxwell felt as though someone put a hand on her shoulder and a voice whispered in her ear, "We're so glad you're coming back. We don't want anybody here but you."

On the following afternoon Miss Maxwell refused Mr. Willings.



"You ought really to be very grateful to us. Instead of that you are naughty."

Children

By

Arnold Bennett

Illustrated by J. K. Macdonald.

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TO THE CHILD.

AN understanding of the psychology of the child is a very important thing in the equipment of parents. Most mothers pick it up quickly enough, and many of them could give lessons to professors who write books about it. An understanding of the principles of education is another very important thing in the same equipment. Very few parents ever pick it up, and consequently they educate their children, or cause them to be educated, quite badly, even absurdly, pathetically, criminally; and no nation in the world to-day has a system of education which is not largely ridiculous.

The fundamental matter, however, in the affair of rearing the next generation is neither the knowledge of child-psychology nor a knowledge of the principles of education. It is a just appreciation in the parental mind of the basis of right relations between parent and child. All other matters, be they as important as they may, are secondary to this, and must derive from it. If the appreciation of the true basis of relations is wrong, nearly everything else is likely to be wrong.

Now, in producing a child the parents are acting in accord with the promptings of nature; they are workers in the illimitable field of evolution; they are helping to carry out the vast designs of destiny. But this fact does not consciously influence their proceedings. They do not talk to each other about evolution, mother-nature, or the designs of destiny, and then add: "Therefore we must bring a child into the world."

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They introduce the child to a planet of rather doubtful felicity simply because they think it will be nice, proper, agreeable, interesting, thrilling for them to have a child in the house. They think of themselves primarily. They will even go so far as to say: "Old age without children would be awful." They do not regard the enterprise primarily from the point of view of the child. Many of them do not regard it from the point of view of the child at all. Their own satisfactions are always the first consideration, and often the sole consideration.

And yet, before the child is seven years old, the parents will in all probability be remarking to the child:—

"Look at all we are doing for you; we give you pretty clothes and nice food and think about your welfare day and night. You ought really to be very grateful to us. Instead of that you are naughty; you are a thankless child. The least you could do would be to show your gratitude to us by behaving well."

This attitude, I regret to have to assert, is hypocritical nonsense, and the child, if not a fool, feels that it is hypocritical nonsense and resents it as such. The child resents and despises nothing more keenly than hypocrisy, and hypocrisy is the cardinal sin of parents. Children, with all their fancy and make-believe, are ruthless and terrible realists in matters which seem important to them. Unfortunate, but not to be seriously disputed!

"These tyrannical giants are horribly unfair."

The baby owes nothing at all to his parents. He has no responsibilities, no duties. The parents owe everything to the baby. Their responsibility to him is complete, their duties are endless. They are most solemnly bound to use every effort to keep him in good health and happy, to build up his constitution, to fit him for the world, and to launch him upon the world. In time their responsibility lessens, but it never disappears. Whatever happens, it cannot end. If the child, grown into a man, gets ten years' imprisonment for a vile crime, they are bound to meet him at the prison gates on his release. They made him. He is theirs, the product of their largely selfish desire to live fully. Unless they knew themselves to be unfitted to be parents they were quite right to have the child, but the price due for the privilege of parenthood is exceedingly high, and if they do not realize how high it is, that was their own fault; they cannot decently avoid payment.

TO return to the baby. After a short period of no responsibility and no duties, he begins to learn that he has a duty—the duty of obedience, and this is followed by the perception of other duties not only to the parents, but to himself and to society. He feels the weight of the duties long before he can grasp the reasons of them. He is a fatalist. The one thing that he does deeply understand is that he is helpless under the sway of autocrats with almost unlimited power. To talk to the victim of autocracy about gratitude to the autocrats must surely be rather exasperating. Such revoltingly insincere chatter ought never to be indulged in. It can do harm and nothing but harm.

Further, it is equally pernicious in family relations to blame the child for his wicked propensities. Reason with him about his wicked propensities; point them out to him; show him how to get the better of them; sympathize with him on being afflicted with them. But for Heaven's sake do not blame him for them. He did not choose them, he had absolutely no voice in the selection of them; he certainly did not desire them; he would much prefer to be without them. (He did not even ask to be brought into the world.) His wicked propensities have been derived from his parents, and through them, and they might just as well reproach him for being tuberculous or dyspeptic as for

being a liar or greedy. The child so treated is justified in exclaiming, and doubtless does exclaim in the privacy of the subconscious to which no parent has the *entrée* :—

"These tyrannical giants are horribly unfair. They expect me to thank them because I'm alive, and not content with that they condemn me for all sorts of things I can't help. I don't like it, and this world of theirs is an odiously unjust world."

The child begins by being the centre round which the entire household revolves.

In unfavourable circumstances this mood of resentment may occur at intervals for twenty or thirty years; it may occur indefinitely; it is a very bad one for everybody concerned, and the parents are primarily responsible for it. Of course, as he ripens in experience and sense the offspring dimly and then more clearly sees that, though the parents are immediately responsible for his existence, they were in fact no more and no less free agents than he is himself, and that all the generations are linked together in the net of nature, evolution, and destiny, and must make the best of the predicament together; also that the best of the predicament may be a pretty fine thing. He comprehends that it was not by mere wanton caprice that his parents produced him, but in obedience to the greatest force on earth and in pursuance of an ultimate end that neither he nor they can understand.

And this comprehension is the beginning of his realization of his responsibilities to his parents, which responsibilities may well increase while the parents' responsibilities to himself may decrease. Not that the responsibilities of the offspring can ever be as serious and as binding as the original responsibilities of the parents!

To grasp the reality of the situation which I have outlined, to see it impartially, to get rid of all prejudice and all egotism in dealing with it, is the very foundation of wise parenthood.

THERE is something marvellous and exquisite in the spectacle of a growing child, something which produces transport in the hearts of the parents, who are amazed at the beauty, the interest, the eternal wonder of what they have achieved. The miracle develops daily, and the development is ten thousand times more baffling and absorbing than the magic of any magician. The relations of the three are characterized by a unique tenderness, unlike any other kind of tenderness in the experience of the parents, superior perhaps in vital satisfactions to any other kind. The parents give, both from conscience and by instinct. They give magnificently, without end. The child also gives, but by instinct alone. It gives all it has. Its trust, its confidence, its conviction of safety, its generosity in affection, its bewildering variety of self-expression, its leaps from step to step of the ladder of intelligence—all these ravish and enchant the parents. And the omnipotent protective love of the parents, its ingenuity, and resourcefulness and inexhaustibleness, ravish and enchant the child. The domestic scene is pervaded by an atmosphere of

soft ecstasy and devotion from which all calculation has apparently been abolished Can anything be finer? Nothing can.

Then why do I seek to administer logic to the affair, balance the pros and cons of individual interests, and bring down to earth that which is celestial?

I hold that a positive duty of parents is to make childhood happy.

Well, the trouble is that the domestic scene with a child in it is not always, nor nearly always, as I have just described it. Too often it is the very contrary. Its contrariness may be devastating, may approach the tragic. The child knows better than the other two what is wrong; but the child cannot efficiently tell what is wrong, nor can it set the wrong right. The parents alone can set the wrong right. They cannot set right without finding out what is wrong. They cannot find out what is wrong without discovering what the child's point of view is. They cannot discover what the child's point of view is without putting themselves in the place of the child and viewing the situation from precisely that spot. They cannot get there without employing logic and without a cold, hard examination of those universal motives and sentiments which are as strong in the child as in themselves.

The parents exist to teach the child, but also they must learn what the child has to teach them; and the child has a very great deal to teach them. Chiefly, the child has to teach them imagination, which is the source of justice and the foe of cruelty, conscious or unconscious. Brain-work is at least as important as heart-work in this transcendently delicate matter. And the raw material of brain-work is here the hard facts of human nature. If you ignore them justice cannot emerge; and though children are not particularly lavish in giving justice to others, they know in their secret souls what justice is, and they want a lot of it; they want more than justice. Give them less, and good-bye to smooth relations. Good-bye to making the best of the parents' lives or the best of the child's life. You may estimate that justice comes next to milk.

HAPPINESS AND SPOILING.

THE child begins by being the centre round which the entire household revolves. He is the most important person in the household. Every other person is sacrificed to this great and exacting and incomprehensible and delicate person. Which is right, and nearly inevitable, for a certain period. Some parents prolong the period unduly. Indeed, there are parents who prolong it indefinitely and sacrifice their whole lives to the child, denying themselves comforts, pleasures, and even the proper cultivation of their own individualities so that the child may have the finest possible opportunities of prospering.

Such a policy on the part of parents is usually regarded as highly praiseworthy. I doubt whether it ought to be so regarded. If one life is frustrated in order that another may flourish the net gain to humanity is not very appreciable—especially when, as not infrequently happens, the second life fails to flourish according to plan. Supposing that the older generation through the centuries sacrificed itself to the younger, the result would be an eternal stultifying of mankind, and the permanent suppression of self-development. Parents should be clever enough to attend to the child's welfare and their own welfare simultaneously. If they prove incapable of this double feat they are imperfectly equipped for parenthood and deserve not praise for lofty ideals, but censure for narrow-mindedness. Why should the child count more heavily than the parents? There is a happy mean even in parental devotion, and when parental devotion falls into extravagance it is a reproach.

The child should be shifted from his central god-like position gradually, in proportion as his perception grows. When he has acquired wit enough to know that he is the chief person in the household, then he should cease to be the chief person. Many parents keep him on the throne in fact, while pretending to him that he is not on the throne, that indeed he is the lowliest of the lowly and of no consequence whatever. Such a course is futile and mischievous, and the more so if it comprises acts of superficial severity. Every child who is the centre of a household is infallibly aware of it, and no amount of assurances to the contrary, no strictness of discipline, will change the conviction and the habit of mind which necessarily springs from the conviction. He will be merely puzzled, annoyed, and alienated by the unpleasant and pain-giving attempts to repudiate the truth of that which is hourly obvious to him.

All which brings us to the great question of disciplinary strictness versus spoiling. It is a commonplace that within the last quarter of a century disciplinary strictness in the treatment of children has largely yielded to spoiling. The change is not quite a novelty, for in the memoirs of every period you will find parents saying that *they* were never spoilt as they spoil *their* children, and that discipline is going to the dogs, etc. In fact, all the usual parental lamentations! There can, however, be little doubt that the change has been very much accelerated within our own time, though perhaps less in Great Britain than in the other chief countries of the world.

I am in favour of spoiling in moderation, not only because the increase in spoiling is the result of a more scientific understanding of child psychology, but because I hold that a positive duty of parents is to make childhood happy. They have other duties, but no more important duty and no duty in which failure is more poignantly regrettable. Childhood is pre-eminently the age for happiness, and an unhappy or a tedious childhood injuriously affects the whole of life. I would sooner see a happy child than a child who never, never told a lie. And the spectacle of a bored child is not rendered less tragic to me by his marvellous attainments in industry, punctuality, cleanliness, politeness, or quadratic equations.

I admit that spoiling does not invariably result in the happiness of the spoiled. A child may be unhappy as the direct consequence of his spoiling. But such spoiling has evidently been excessive and continuous. Intermittent spoiling in a moderate degree does more good than harm. A child ought to have frequent holidays from disciplinary rules of all kinds; and I would give a child half a day a month for the free expression of his individuality. The parents should not always be on top. They should abdicate at intervals, and resume government when sufficient damage has been done and sufficient experience acquired.

IT is astounding but true that the most conscientious parents are apt to forget that their children are quite as human as themselves. What is the objection to spoiling? What lasting harm does it do? The dictionary definition of "to spoil" is to injure the character by indulgence. The evils attendant upon spoiling pass away at adolescence. One hears that spoilt children have bad

"Give the kid the chocolates, for Heaven's sake!" cries the exasperated father.

manners. They sometimes have. For a few brief years they are capable of being a dreadful nuisance to the friends of their parents. What then? The affliction subsides as the child grows up.

Britons consider that both American and French children are spoilt. But in the sequel are the manners of American and French adults inferior to those of British adults? I think not. The frightful consequences of the most extreme and persistent spoiling are quickly curable by the method of dispatching the victim to some colony to keep his end up unaided. Spoiling is a superficial matter. Besides, I would not advocate extreme spoiling. I specifically deprecate it. What I suggest is a decent spoiling, with error, if error there is to be, in the direction of generosity.

But there is spoiling and spoiling: spoiling for the sake of the child, and spoiling for the sake of the parents. The parents may spoil a child out of sheer laziness, or from lack of faith in the power of their own individualities against the power of the child's individuality. And so they will purchase peace with dishonour, as a rich Government will buy off a poverty-stricken opposing general.

"Give the kid the chocolates, for Heaven's sake!" cries the exasperated and exhausted father; the mother sighs and gives. The kid munches and smiles; turmoil suddenly ceases.

"I have won," says the child to himself, even though he cannot yet talk. And he has his first glimpse into the baseness of human nature and comprehends the meaning of corruption.

This spoiling is shameful; it is shocking; it depraves the home; it suppresses trouble while preparing more trouble.

Again, parents may spoil a child from their own vanity. The child, for example, likes to show off; they are aware that it is bad for a child to show off; but they are proud of the most wonderful infant ever born, and they let him show off; nay, they encourage him to show off. This is odious, and it has the added disadvantage of boring all the friends of the household and breeding duplicity in those friends who are obliged to feign a delight which assuredly they do not feel. Often only a high estate of civilization prevents such displaying children from being murdered where they recite or sing by adults whom their infantile performances have rendered homicidal.

BUT the worst kind of spoiling is that in which the parents indulge for the soothing of their consciences. Having thwarted the child for their own convenience, they are seized with remorse—not enough remorse to induce them to stop the thwarting, but enough to induce them to make some attempt "to make it up" to him. The evil is thus doubled. They will forbid the child to develop his individuality in directions which may be disagreeable or inconvenient to them personally. That is to say, they will morally imprison the child. Then they glance at the cage, and they exclaim:—

"This cage looks very dull. Let us gild the bars."

And they gild the bars, and coo to the prisoner:—

"See how the bars glitter. Aren't we kind to you? Do not say after this that we do not love you."

Is this a fanciful picture? Not at all. It is simply a description of the case, for example, in which mamma says:—

"No, my dear Mary. Your father and I

"No, my dear Mary. Your father and I cannot consent to your going in for art (or whatever it may be); but you shall have three new frocks and more pocket-money."

cannot consent to your going in for art (or medicine, or a not-rich husband, or whatever it may be); but you shall have three new frocks and more pocket-money, and we will do everything to make you happy. We sincerely want you to be happy."

By which is meant:—

"We want you to be happy—in so far as your happiness does nothing to impair ours."

All schoolmasters are familiar with the parent who wants to give special instructions about his perfectly unique child.

This is spoiling at its vilest. And it is still much practised, particularly in the most refined circles.

"The child *ought* to be happy!"

There is no more futile phrase than this. Do you suppose that the child is unhappy from naughtiness, from contrariness, or because he prefers unhappiness to happiness? Happiness cannot be a question of "ought." If a child is unhappy for long, the sole explanation is that the parents have been either not clever enough, or not unselfish enough, to make the best of the child's life—and therefore of their own lives. The child has to be fitted for the world, and it is necessary to employ some plan for that purpose. But the plan must be adapted to the child, and not the child to the plan—within reason, of course. A child who is preponderantly unhappy is being day by day unfitted for the world, let the parental plan be as wise as it may.

UNIQUENESS, NOISINESS, AND CURIOSITY.

IN regard to the bringing up of children, there are one or two points which, although they may seem to be of minor importance, are just as universal in their application as anything before mentioned.

The first is that parents are apt to look upon their children as mysteriously "different" from other children. Every child is unique just as every adult is unique, but children do not differ from one another in the manner which parents suppose. In salient characteristics—those characteristics with which principally parents have to deal—all children are roughly alike; and the view to the contrary is a superstition engendered by pride and anxiety in the parental mind. All schoolmasters are familiar with the parent who more or less openly wants to give special instructions and advice about his perfectly unique child. That kind of parent indeed is in a large majority among parents. Schoolmasters listen with what politeness they can muster to the remarks of the parent, whose tone says: "At last you have got your work cut out—here is my precious child that I am confiding to you." And having listened, they callously go their own way. And schoolmasters are justified in so doing. The chances are a hundred to one that the schoolmaster knows much better than the parent how to get the best out of a given child. He knows better because his vision is quite unprejudiced, and because he has had far more experience. The parent may know something about a few children during a few years—it is a prodigy among modern parents who knows something about a dozen children!—but the schoolmaster has handled thousands of children, during half or two-thirds of a lifetime. He thinks about children all day, and often the worried man has to dream about them all night; he sees all round them and through them; and in any conflict of opinion between himself and the parent, he is almost certain to be in the right.

Again, many parents wrong-headedly imagine that they can cure their children of certain traits which all other children have and which are inconvenient to parents.

They can, and often do, effect a cure, but not usefully—harmfully. Noise and restlessness in the house, for example. What can be more annoying to a truly refined and sensitive parent than a little band of shrill monsters who won't keep still? But truly refined and sensitive persons ought not to be parents. Parenthood is a job for the sturdy and insensitive. It is commonly rather a rough job. Children have to make a noise, and they have to move violently about. They have an excess of energy which must find a vent. The parent who is for ever exhorting in a hushed voice: "Quietly! Quietly now!" ought to have made inquiries about the real nature of children before becoming a parent—and then decided to go into a monastery. The children of whom it is admiringly said by the parents of other children, "You never hear them," are being martyrized, stunted, and imprisoned.

Then there is the dreadful, the everlasting, the insatiable, the appalling, inconvenient curiosity, and the devilish argumentative disposition of children. Also highly troublesome to parents! A torment to parents which endures for fifteen to eighteen years at least! But children are educated by two concurrent methods. They are educated by parents and teachers, and they are self-educated. The two methods are, for the most part, mutually antagonistic, but one is just as good and as necessary as the other. The curiosity and the argumentativeness constitute the child's self-education. There is nothing naughty or futile about them, nothing meet for reproach. The parent who snubs curiosity and argumentativeness is unrighteously shirking his duty for his own relief. The parent who ends an argument by the mere exercise of authority is despicable—and despicable, too, in the sight of the child. For the youngest child is well aware that a man who stands on his dignity must be a man of short moral stature. The insight of children into the psychology of parents is uncanny—perhaps superior to the insight of parents into the psychology of children.

The insight of children into the psychology of parents is uncanny.

THE BEWILDERING EGG

By BRENTWOOD ARLEY.

ILLUSTRATED BY LAWSON WOOD.

SIR RAYMOND BALLANTYNE heaved a sigh and looked at his supper with distaste. He was returning from one of his numerous specimen-hunting expeditions into the far interior of Africa. It had been a failure; his collection of specimens was enriched by but one new species of beetle. The tragedy of confronting his expectant colleagues appalled him.

He left his supper uneaten and strolled down to the river bank. Suddenly his attention was attracted by a large white object half hidden by the thick foliage around. Prompt investigation proved it to be a white coarse-shelled egg, of gigantic size.

He whistled anxiously for his native boys; two of them responded at the run. Their amazement at the monster egg was as great as his. Neither could offer any solution of the mystery. Neither of them displayed any great enthusiasm when ordered to remove the egg with all care and carry it to the coast, but they obeyed orders.

Their journey to the coast was not a long one, and the egg had shown no sign of hatching when Sir Raymond boarded the *Mujeikle*. He had no difficulty in securing accommodation for his strange specimen. For one thing, he had sailed on the *Mujeikle* many times before and was well known to the Captain and the First Officer. For another, he was the largest shareholder in that particular shipping company. The egg, therefore, was safely deposited in a quiet corner of the hold without demur.

"I have succeeded in performing one

more service to humanity, Radford," Sir Raymond remarked, gleefully, to the First Officer.

The First Officer eyed him dubiously. He remembered, all too vividly, a sting which he had received from one of Sir Raymond's specimen spiders, which had laid him up with blood-poisoning for nearly a month, and his appreciation of the services which Sir Raymond Ballantyne was rendering to humanity was not too apparent.

For a week the egg remained snugly in its nest, growing perceptibly darker with each succeeding day.

On the eighth morning of his trip, Sir Raymond was awakened by a steward at an unexpectedly early hour.

"If you please, Sir Raymond," announced that worthy, "the egg 'as 'atched."

"Eh?" cried Sir Raymond, jumping from his berth. "What has it hatched into?"

"Well, I don't rightly know," said the steward, glumly, "but perhaps you will, sir."

Sir Raymond speedily attired himself in a dressing-gown and bedroom slippers, and proceeded to investigate.

They found the First Officer pacing up and down before the egg's storage place. "I found it," he said, curtly. "Blundered in this morning, tripped over its tail in the dark, flashed my electric torch on, and backed out again in double quick time."

He unbolted the door carefully and opened it a tentative inch. "Seems quiet enough," he opined, and threw it wide open. Sir Raymond uttered a shriek of pure joy. A gigantic, half-awake creature was curled up comfortably upon the floor. Even Sir Raymond, used to the great discrepancy in size between a reptile's egg and its contents, wondered how its bulk had been compressed into so small a compass. Including its tail and its giraffe-like neck, the monster must have measured a good twenty feet. It was covered with a coat of slate-grey fur and its snout was surmounted by a horn. Sir Raymond at once recognized it for a Dinosaurus.

Sir Raymond uttered a shriek of pure joy. A gigantic, half-awake creature was curled up comfortably upon the floor.

"The greatest scientific discovery of my generation!" he exclaimed, jubilantly. "What a boon to humanity!"

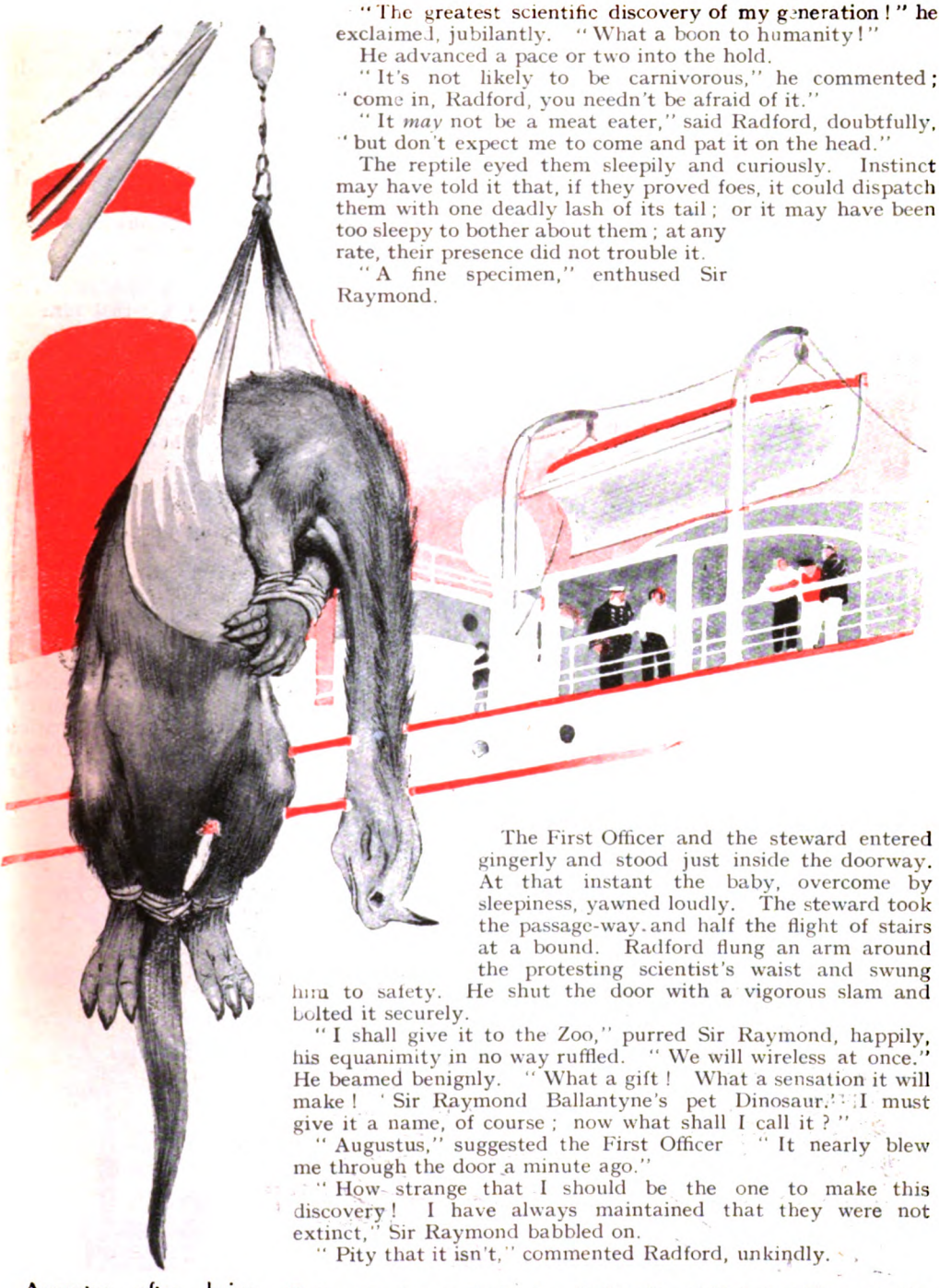
He advanced a pace or two into the hold.

"It's not likely to be carnivorous," he commented; "come in, Radford, you needn't be afraid of it."

"It *may* not be a meat eater," said Radford, doubtfully, "but don't expect me to come and pat it on the head."

The reptile eyed them sleepily and curiously. Instinct may have told it that, if they proved foes, it could dispatch them with one deadly lash of its tail; or it may have been too sleepy to bother about them; at any rate, their presence did not trouble it.

"A fine specimen," enthused Sir Raymond.



Augustus, after being chloroformed and securely tied, was safely hoisted over the vessel's side by a crane.

The First Officer and the steward entered gingerly and stood just inside the doorway. At that instant the baby, overcome by sleepiness, yawned loudly. The steward took the passage-way and half the flight of stairs at a bound. Radford flung an arm around the protesting scientist's waist and swung him to safety. He shut the door with a vigorous slam and bolted it securely.

"I shall give it to the Zoo," purred Sir Raymond, happily, his equanimity in no way ruffled. "We will wireless at once." He beamed benignly. "What a gift! What a sensation it will make! 'Sir Raymond Ballantyne's pet Dinosaur.' I must give it a name, of course; now what shall I call it?"

"Augustus," suggested the First Officer. "It nearly blew me through the door a minute ago."

"How strange that I should be the one to make this discovery! I have always maintained that they were not extinct," Sir Raymond babbled on.

"Pity that it isn't," commented Radford, unkindly.

IT was due entirely to Radford's skilful handling of the situation that Augustus, after being chloroformed and securely tied, was safely hoisted over the vessel's side by a crane and landed upon England's shores.

Sir Raymond Ballantyne found himself faced by an unpleasant

problem when the Zoo authorities politely but firmly declined to take charge of Augustus. It laid the scientist under the painful necessity of offering Augustus the hospitality of his own Yorkshire home. He had an uneasy feeling that his neighbours, to say nothing of his domestics, might object. The method of housing such a pet, too, was a problem. He remembered with a sinking heart that a handy little volume entitled "Freak Pets and Their Care," which had helped him out of many a corner, was woefully incomplete. It contained no section on the care of the Dinosaur.

A chat with the head gardener solved the problem.

Appreciation of the First Officer's sound common sense induced him to offer that bewildered young man a three weeks' holiday at Ballantyne Hall.

"That's awfully good of you, Sir Raymond," he said, gratefully, "but really I couldn't think of such a thing."

"Oh, come," Sir Raymond protested, "I really want your—er—society, Radford, and I believe that you once told me that you had no near relatives."

"No, I haven't," Radford confessed.

"Well, then, what's the trouble?" demanded Sir Raymond, quickly. "You may find it a bit quiet, but there's plenty of good fishing and shooting." He paused and racked his brains to discover further attractions. He remembered in the nick of time that his collection of tropical spiders would not prove an attraction to this particular guest. But the prospect of free fishing had already got the better of Radford's prudence.

"It's real good of you, sir," he accepted, gratefully. "When do you want me to come?"

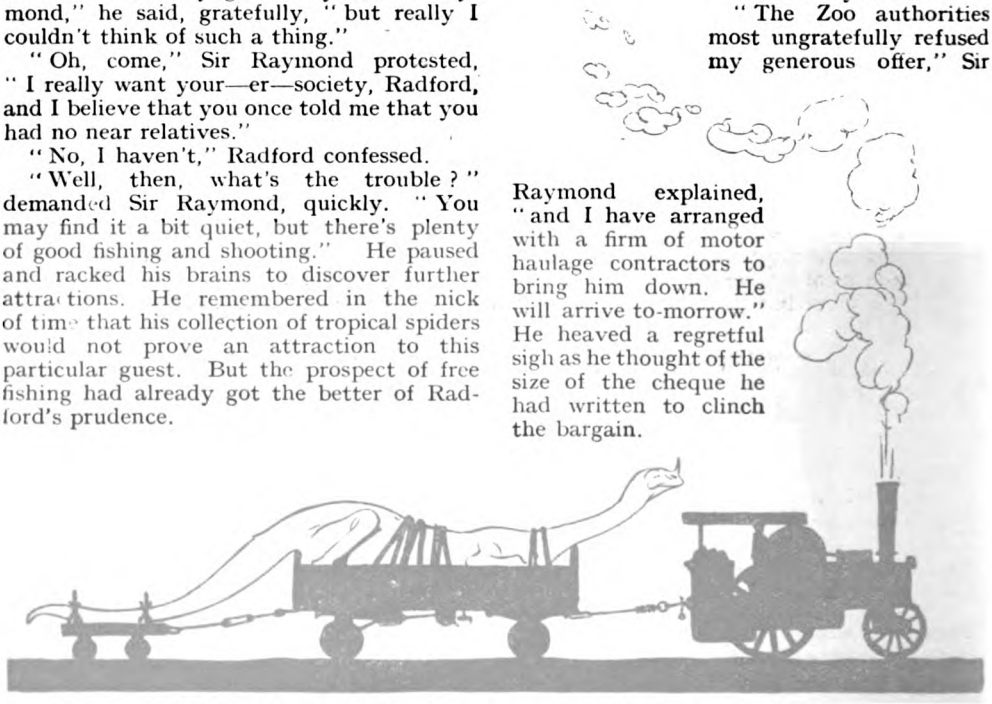
"Come on the three express," said Sir Raymond, promptly. "I'm travelling on that train."

RADFORD settled himself comfortably in the corner of a first-class smoker and smiled at his host. "I don't often get the chance of a holiday like this," he remarked, as the train steamed out of the station. "Fishing is my pet hobby, and it's difficult to get."

"Er—exactly," murmured the guilty scientist. "Well, you will get plenty at Ballantyne Hall. You will be interested in seeing Augustus comfortably put up, no doubt."

"Eh?" gasped the startled Radford. "What do you mean?"

"The Zoo authorities most ungratefully refused my generous offer," Sir Raymond explained, "and I have arranged with a firm of motor haulage contractors to bring him down. He will arrive to-morrow." He heaved a regretful sigh as he thought of the size of the cheque he had written to clinch the bargain.



A firm of motor haulage contractors brought Augustus down.

After one wild glance at the rapidly-moving countryside, Radford brought his customary philosophy to bear upon the situation. "Not having him in the house, are you?" he queried.

"Oh, dear, no," exclaimed Sir Raymond. "How could it get any exercise? Besides, it may grow to eighty feet, and our largest room is only sixty."

"That's all right," returned Radford. "I shouldn't care for him to share the state bedroom with me."

"The fact is," confessed Sir Raymond, "I don't quite know how to keep him, and I thought perhaps you might be able to help me."

"No!" returned Radford, decisively. "The only pet I ever kept was a white mouse. I let it sleep on my pillow at night and took it to school in my pocket; but Augustus is a bit too bulky for that."

"Decidedly," agreed the scientist, sadly. "Never mind," he added, brightening, "you'll perhaps hit on something when you see the place."

Radford shifted uncomfortably in his seat, and said nothing.

A bright red char-à-bancs took his fancy. For a brief space they raced along neck-and-neck.

SIR RAYMOND soon discovered that he had not been mistaken in his estimate of Radford's abilities. Urged by the necessity of making some arrangements before the arrival of Augustus, the young man made an early tour of the territory which could be placed at the creature's disposal. An inspection of the acres of moorland which adjoined and belonged to the Hall eased his mind a bit. It gave ample room for Augustus to enjoy life—if only he could be kept upon his owner's land.

"And the only way to do that," he assured Sir Raymond, "is to hit upon some secure way of tethering the brute."

A chat with the head gardener, who was well accustomed to his master's idiosyncrasies, solved the problem.

"Ye see, sir," he opined, "if 'e be'aves 'isself like, 'appen the Zoo'll 'ave 'im arter a bit. I 'ave known things like that to 'appen, an' if that don't 'appen there's just

the chance 'at the cold'll be too much fer 'im in the winter. So, in any case, it's only fer a time like, sir. There's plenty o' room fer 'im to be comf'table an' enjoy 'isself, so long's 'e ain't let to go too far. O' course, if 'e goes wanderin' over other people's grounds, there'll be a nasty bit o' trouble, sir. Wot we want to do is just to fit 'im up nice an' comf'table with a good length o' strong chain, an' that'll do while 'e gets stronger. 'Appen Sir Raymond'll be tired o' 'im be then. You'll be seein' 'im fixed up, sir?."

"I shall be out fishing for the rest of the day," returned Radford, hastily.

FOR the first fortnight of Radford's visit things went smoothly. Augustus comported himself with due decorum; he adapted himself easily to his new life, and proved to be, as Sir Raymond had predicted, a vegetarian.

Sir Raymond had already made vast strides with his new book, "The Habits of the Dinosaur," and had had a number of snaps of Augustus taken in all positions.

It was on the last day of Radford's stay that the placid tenor of Augustus's life was disturbed by an enterprising cinema company. The size of the cheque which the company offered for the privilege of filming Augustus overcame Sir Raymond's prudence.

Radford would rather have been out of it. He scented trouble from the start, but Sir Raymond showed such distress at the idea of losing him, even a day before the date originally fixed, that the young man gave in.

His worst forebodings were realized. Augustus was in no mood for showing off. A good lunch had left him sleepy, and the little party found him wrapped in profound slumber. Roused by his owner, he looked round, blinked an eye, and went to sleep again.

His roar was one of pure delight at finding some appreciative spirits with whom to share his new-found pleasure.

"What are we to do?" queried the perplexed scientist.

"Film his snore," suggested Radford.

'If you were to untether him," suggested the harassed producer, "perhaps you could get him to move about a bit. I wanted to get him feeding, for one thing."

"It won't be safe to untether him," Radford protested.

"I think it will," returned Sir Raymond. "He's quite tame—knows me perfectly—quite a pet."

The removal of his chain did not serve to arouse the sleeping beauty. A small pebble carefully aimed at its nose by the producer had the desired effect, however.

With a roar, Augustus reared himself up on his hind legs. Simultaneously with the movement came the knowledge that he was free. He cleared thirty feet of moorland at

Augustus whirled round and round in an endeavour to shake off this unwanted encumbrance. The wretched Bill gripped the Dinosaur's horn tightly

a bound, felling the unfortunate Radford with his tail. Following his wild instincts, he made a rush for liberty. Before the terrified group could grasp the extent of the catastrophe, he was racing at full speed in the direction of the hills, leaving Radford bewailing a broken leg.

Walking on all fours, Augustus could do no more than a comfortable six miles an hour; leaping, he could more than treble his speed. Five minutes brought him within sight of the main thoroughfare to Scotland. He moved more slowly as he approached it. The streams of motor vehicles puzzled him, also the general acceleration of speed; then the solution struck him—these humans were racing. He decided to join them.

A bright red char-à-bancs took his fancy. He pursued it in hot haste. For a brief space they raced along neck-and-neck. Augustus noticed that several cars coming in the opposite direction turned, and retraced their way at a speed utterly inconsistent with public safety.

As they neared a busy corner a white-faced passenger hurled a bottle at the Dinosaur. It went wide of the mark, and smashed to pieces in the roadway. An oncoming motor-car had its tyres cut to ribbons as it rounded the bend. The deafening report shook Augustus's nerves badly. With a terrified roar he headed for the open country.

He had a wide stretch of deserted moorland to himself, and he spent two hours of glorious freedom before the sight of a human habitation, combined with an intense thirst, due to his unaccustomed exertions, drove him at a brisk pace in the direction of Cat Hole Farm. He moved cautiously, casting his eyes anxiously around for someone to minister to his requirements. He quickened his pace at the sight of Farmer Hopkinson in the yard; but to his keen disappointment the farmer, after one brief glance at his visitor, took refuge in the house, slamming the door vigorously behind him.

Augustus was hurt by this unfriendly reception; but his spirits rose at the sight of a large pail of milk standing outside the door. His head was small as yet, but his horn stood in the way of his reaching the bottom of the pail. He succeeded in

quenching his thirst, however, and, licking his lips appreciatively, made off over the moor again.

"Only enough left fer 'alf the customers," the farmer lamented, staring sadly at the milk-pail. "Well, well, we'll 'ave ter divide it up as fair as we can, an' do wi'out oursels."

Augustus trotted happily over the moor in the direction of the Mereswood Plantation. Instinct told him that this was his natural environment; contentment surged through him as he rubbed his long neck upon a tree trunk and listened with entranced ears to the ripple of a near-by stream. He wriggled cautiously in the direction of the sound, and poked his head inquiringly through the trees.

John Longmire, intent upon his favourite pastime, had almost forgotten that his young wife had accompanied him upon his fishing expedition, when her voice, raised in accents of terror, broke upon his ears.

"Jack, Jack, whatever is it?"

"A weasel," he returned, without looking round. "I told you I'd seen some here. You need never be afraid of them, unless there are a num——"

Augustus's tail missed the angler's head by the merest fraction of an inch as he plunged into the stream with a resounding splash. A roar of annoyance broke from him as he found John Longmire's line entangled upon his horn. The rapidity with which he dashed a greenheart fishing-rod to pieces upon a stone gave its owner cause for thankfulness that he had relinquished his hold upon the first glimpse of the horrifying apparition.

John Longmire dashed into the wood, dragging his weeping wife with him.

"You said you'd seen some more near here," she wailed. "Oh, Jack, how could you bring me when you knew there were such horrible things about?"

Her husband refrained from speech till they were clear of the wood. "Never again," he announced, decisively, "will I take two bottles of stout with my lunch."

Meanwhile Augustus splashed happily down stream. For generations his kinsfolk had been accustomed to spending much of their time in the water; he discovered that his tail was admirably adapted for swimming. As he neared the first bend in the stream the sound of merry laughter reached him. He quickened his pace and came into view of a group of youthful bathers. His roar was one of pure delight at finding some appreciative spirits with whom to share his new-found

With a roar he leaped joyfully on to the lawn. The guests fled in a body.

pleasure. The screams which greeted his arrival puzzled him somewhat. To his surprise the boys made for the bank as swiftly as possible. In their haste two of them plunged head-first into a bed of nettles.

Augustus landed a little farther down the bank, pausing to investigate some piles of clothing, which he pulled systematically to pieces. The bathers had sought the shelter of the wood and the topmost tree branches therein. Augustus searched for them vainly until a glimpse of the setting sun reminded him that it was time to secure a sleeping-place. He raced full speed for an inviting-looking mountain peak and was comfortably ensconced upon the top before the dusk fell.

He had a little doze in his secure retreat; but he had missed his supper, and presently he awoke to a full consciousness of his hungry state.

It was a bright moonlight night, admirably suited to a stroll. He stretched himself and descended the mountain again.

The news of his disappearance had been widely circulated, but he attracted no attention on his descent; the fells were deserted, save for a few sheep who scattered wildly on his approach. Ever and anon his tail would catch a boulder and send it rolling into a beck or pothole.

"I MET Parson to-day an' 'e were at me ter give up the drink," remarked old Bill Watkins to the company assembled in the Rose and Crown.

A derisive laugh greeted the announcement.

"I likes 'is cheek," commented one listener, "'im a-comin' 'ere a young man an' tryin' ter teach us old 'uns wot's wot. Why, 'e's been at me ter sign the pledge ever since 'e come."

"'E's a-wantin' of us all ter sign," retorted the first speaker. "An' me wot's bin drunk every night o' my life since I were a bit lad, as my missus can swear to. Parson 'e says 'at the Devil'll be gettin' me in a bit if I don't give the drink up. Well, I don't think I'll be troublin' t'old gen'leman fer a few years yet, an' meanwhile I'm goin' ter enjoy life."

His audience chorused approval.

Half an hour later the company, somewhat uncertain of gait, staggered into the roadway.

Bill Watkins advanced a step or two, choked, spluttered, and leaned against the wall. On the opposite side of the road, silhouetted clearly in the moonlight, was a hideous black shape, which Bill recognized all too clearly. "I allus thought 'at 'e 'ad two 'orns, though," the drunkard gasped, weakly. "It's all up wi' me now. Parson was right. 'E's come fer me at last."

A queer half-sobbing sound issued from the lips of Jake Langdale just behind him. "Funny fer Jake ter see 'im too," Bill mused. "I allus thought it were only the man wot 'e'd come fer as saw 'im; leastways, I saw nothin' on 'im when me father died. 'Appen it's Jake 'e's come fer, an' not me.

"Wot is it, Jake?" he queried aloud.

"N-nothin'," answered that worthy in subdued tones. "Wot's up wi' you, Bill?"

"Nothin'," returned Bill in turn, staring wanly at the figure of the Dinosaur.

Augustus was taking his bearings. He was hungry, and he was wont to associate human beings with food. Leaping over the wall, he planted himself firmly across the road in the path of the trembling Bill. The terrified Jake, endeavouring to effect a rapid turn, stumbled, overbalanced, and lay prone. Augustus bent his head and prodded him gently with his horn.

"It's 'im 'e's come fer," gasped Bill in relief. He in turn endeavoured to run, stumbled, fell forward against something furry, and clutched desperately at a handful of fur to save himself. To his horror he found himself being whirled rapidly from the ground. So the Devil had come for him, had got him, too.

"Hey, we be a-goin' the wrong way, bain't we?" he asked, weakly.

For answer Augustus leapt the wall again and whirled round and round in an endeavour to shake off this unwanted encumbrance. The wretched Bill gripped the Dinosaur's horn tightly. Augustus roared with mingled fright and anger and bolted madly, tossing his head violently as he went.

A hideous terror gripped Bill's heart as he saw whither they were bound. Augustus was heading for the "Devil's Pot," a fearsome-looking pothole which no one had ever succeeded in descending. Its great depth had earned for it the reputation of being the chief entrance to His Satanic Majesty's Kingdom, and his most favoured means of access to the earth.

Bill burst forth into piteous appeals for one more chance. But Augustus was thoroughly tired of the game. He came to an abrupt halt and shook his head with increased vigour.

Bill lost his grip, felt himself falling, falling. He plunged with a resounding splash into a little mountain stream. The cold douche was the last thing he had expected; never had he experienced so blessed a sense of relief. The stream was a small one, and getting ashore was a comparatively easy task. He sat upon the bank breathing heavily. Augustus had vanished.

"Gone 'ome," he murmured. "I got another chance. First thing termorrer I signs the pledge."

Six other habitual frequenters of the Rose and Crown had come to the same decision.

FORTUNE at last favoured Augustus in his search for food. He discovered a plantation, and, by the light of the moon, proceeded to strip the trees of their foliage. His hunger appeased, he fared forth once more in search of water and a sleeping-place. He found a small stream which provided for the first of his requirements; his second need was supplied by the famous pine wood which adjoins Hainault House, the country seat of Lord Dalriven, after which he slept peacefully, the roar of a near-by waterfall drowning his snores.

It was early afternoon when he awoke, and a garden-party was in progress in that part of the demesne which adjoined the wood. Happy human voices fell like music upon his ears. He felt hungry again, and human beings suggested to his mind dainties more delectable than the leaves of trees.

With a bound he sat up on his hind legs, revealing his head, long, giraffe-like neck, and some feet of his furry body to the terrified guests. With a roar he leaped joyfully on to the lawn. The guests fled in a body, their shrieks mingling with the smashing of crockery incidental to the overturning of some half-dozen small tables.

But, at any rate, they had left plenty of edibles for his consumption. He set himself to soothe his wounded feelings by a gorgeous feast of buns and cakes. In the midst of his enjoyment a loud crack sounded from the direction of the house, and he was conscious of a stinging pain in his snout. A glance round showed him a human being poking a queer metal thing through one of the lower windows of the house. As he leapt for safety he felt another sting in his tail.

With a roar which echoed back from the scar-crowned hills with fearful intensity, he plunged off in the direction of home. He beat his own previous records for speed, leaping from rock to rock with the agility of his African brothers. He travelled too quickly for news of his approach to reach home before him.

Sir Raymond Ballantyne was seated at his window moodily surveying the deserted moors, when he beheld the figure of Augustus looming dark upon the horizon, Augustus with his long grey mane caked with mud and slime, his sparkling eyes fixed upon his waiting breakfast.

With feverish haste the scientist snatched up his pad and pencil. "The homing instincts of the Dinosaur," he wrote, "are as highly developed as those of the average racing pigeon."

When Sir Raymond reached him, Augustus had finished his meal and was sleeping the peaceful sleep of exhaustion and repletion. When he was securely tethered again he did not even blink an eye.

THAT evening Sir Raymond entered his injured guest's bedroom and plunged heavily into a chair, the picture of misery and disillusion.

"Hallo, what's up?" demanded Radford. "Augustus hasn't got loose again, has he?"

"Lord Dalriven has just called," announced Sir Raymond. "He says that Augustus has ruined two plantations, smashed a valuable Sèvres tea service, pulled chunks out of a lawn with his feet, and frightened a party of guests out of their wits, and he actually insists that I should pay for the damage."

"I shouldn't have thought that a little bill like that would have troubled you, when you've got Augustus safely home again," commented Radford.

"A little bill!" groaned Sir Raymond "Two thousand pounds is what the man is demanding. But it was his rudeness that upset me, Radford. The density of the popular mind is appalling. He actually called Augustus an ugly, useless brute, and a menace to the community. The base ingratitude of the public, Radford, is beyond conception! Why, that man seems utterly unable to grasp the magnitude of the service I have rendered to humanity!"

The Drum

by

F. BRITTEN AUSTIN

ILLUSTRATED BY S SEYMOUR LUCAS

THE fly of the ridge-pole tent was up, and the officer sitting within at the camp-table under the hurricane-lamp, against which immense and fearsomely humming beetles dashed themselves, had a fantastic nocturnal view of black soldiers in European uniforms crouching, grotesquely illuminated in an extravagance of facial gesture, about the red glow of cooking fires, and beyond them the dark wall of the stockade crene lated against the star-powdered blue of the sky. He was dressed in the *négligé* of an open-throated shirt above his breeches and boots, but the holster of a heavy service revolver was still strapped to his waist. Still young and not unhandsome, his face had that character common to those who hold authority in solitary places. The line of the jaw was fashioned into a certain grimness of weight by the habit of swift decisions and dogged endurances; his eyes, veiled for his private thoughts, could be instantly alert. He sat, with a compression of his mouth, motionless, bent for listening, at that table laid with tin plates and knives and forks for two. From out of the dark night, where the stars winked in complicity, issuing from that primeval jungle, eternally present to his mind, which was an immense interlacement of gloom about this precarious outpost of invading civilization, came an insistent sonorous drumming that filled the air and beat upon his ears.

It had an eerie and uncanny quality, that incessant throbbing of the drum, at once monotonous and rapid, on one single note of hollow, macabre reverberation that no European drum could imitate. It pulsed in the air, booming menacingly as though close at hand, and yet he knew from experience that it was a mile or more distant, that if he were to stalk the source of the sound it would get softer and more vague the nearer he approached, baffling him by ceasing to indicate the direction of its origin in a lulled murmur that would seem to come from all quarters at once—while, all the time, at a distance it was as loudly heard as before. The acoustics of it was one of those mysteries, real enough some of them, which the savage holds yet from his white conqueror. Often enough had he heard it reverberating through the African jungle, the invocation of the Juju-man to hidden rites of diabolic worship—ineradicable in the negro-soul; carried from the forests of the Congo to reappear as Voodoo beyond the Atlantic—where, in a climax of grotesquely horrible self-maddened excitement, the white cock, or less innocently a stolen child, is sacrificed with a bedabblement of blood to propitiate the darker powers. It was full of a weird and primitive suggestion that exasperated the nerves and played upon deeps in the mind. Listening to it, he could believe that story of the West Indian negro regiment where the men, commencing in mere idle amusement to drum in the traditional fashion upon empty biscuit-tins, were seized and swept by the frenzy they unwittingly invoked to the massacre of their officers. He could imagine now, in the depths of that African jungle, the mass of black figures, illumined by the torches and the fire, swaying and crooning in a trance-like fascination, while the crudely bedevilled witch-doctor danced indefatigably before the crouching negro who thrummed softly with his fingers on the drumhead the note that swelled as its vibrations passed to more distant air. The savage enemy, undefeated by his last foiled attack on the stockade—there had been one hot half-hour when it

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was touch and go—was invoking supernatural aid for the next attempt.

Not only to him did that diabolical drumming fill the night with something mysteriously malevolent, permeating it as with awakened evil spirits. The men at the cooking fires—ceasing to laugh and jabber, with gesticulation and happy teeth-flashing grins from ear to ear, over their reminiscences of the great killing they had perpetrated at sun-down—had relapsed into an uneasy silence, were evidently listening even as he was. Who knew what superstitious response was stirring in their primitive souls, savages themselves a few months back, savages still under the European uniform? He had half a mind to break the spell by putting them through their drill; desisted because, at this unwonted hour, it was to acknowledge uneasiness in himself.

A TALL man, older than he, but similarly dressed in shirt, breeches, and revolver holster, emerged from the darkness into the lamplight of the tent. The officer looked up.

"Well, Doc., what's the bulletin to-night?"

There was a worried crease between the older man's eyebrows as he took the other camp-chair at the table.

"Three more of 'em down," he said, curtly. "I hope those brutes haven't been playing Juju tricks with the water. I've given it another dose of chloride—but chloride's no use against poison."

The officer frowned also.

"That reduces us to less than fifty per cent. And we can't be relieved for a week at least—there's the message." He passed across a piece of paper. "A runner came in half an hour ago."

The doctor read it, his lips tight, his brows corrugated. The overhead lamplight emphasized by its shadows the strength of character manifest in his lean features.

"Doesn't look very cheerful, does it?" he commented, as he passed back the message. "Well, we'll hang out."

"We'll hang out, of course," replied the officer, "so long"—he looked at the doctor—"so long as nothing happens to you or me. Take care of yourself, Doc. It isn't only a fighting man's job. I can't tackle this confounded sickness. It beats me. It's not the ordinary kind of thing."

The doctor shook his head.

"No—it isn't, that's a fact. But I think I've got it in hand. Two or three seem better and no one has died since yesterday. But"—he glanced keenly at his comrade—"you keep yourself fit, too, Bull, my lad. This is distinctly a fighting man's job as well, and that's not my line. You're not looking any too bright to-night."

"It's that confounded drum!" the younger man burst out in exasperation. "It's getting thoroughly on my nerves." The distant drum still throbbed, uncannily menacing, filling the air with its macabre reverberations.

The doctor nodded.

"I wish to God we could stop it. It's making the men jumpy. They're muttering all sorts of things about Juju spells to each other. That little scrap this evening cheered them up, but the effect is wearing off. They're talking now about that confounded witch-doctor last night, and explaining to each other that of course they couldn't hit him. It *was* a bit of a miracle, at that close range. I hope he doesn't do another little devil-dance outside the stockade again to-night. It isn't good for black men's nerves—or ours either, for that matter."

"I hope he does come," said Bull, grimly. "He'll get the surprise of his life."

He clapped his hands sharply together, and a black soldier-servant came in with the supper.

The two men addressed themselves to the stew of bully-beef, washed down with whisky-and-water. They talked little, but it was evident that they were glad of each other's company in the immense loneliness of their isolation in this African jungle swarming with hostile savages. To have a table-companion of their own race was a luxury sufficiently rare to both to be gratefully appreciated. Their natural taciturnities accorded well together. Each respected the other as a man who knew his job. They had not yet been cooped up long enough in each other's unrelieved society for the emergence of those petty irritations which develop into hostility and hate.

THEY did not even know each other very well. Dr. Steevens was comparatively new to the service, had been sent up-country to deal with an epidemic which was decimating the natives. He had got into conflict with the witch-doctors—principally over the little matter of burying the dead under the hut-floor and the ceremonial sniffing of the corpse—and the witch-doctors had won. They had persuaded the disease-smitten, panic-stricken natives that the sole cause of the epidemic was the presence of white men among them. Dr. Steevens had only got into Bull's station, garrisoned by a detachment of native rifles, by the skin of his teeth.

Since then, for the best part of a week, both men had been perpetually alert, night and day, in a desperate defence tragically complicated by the outbreak of sickness in the post. Both men were feeling the strain more than they would have confessed. Without either one of them, the post was doomed.

Their supper was interrupted by a sudden barbaric din, startling in its propinquity, the feverish thudding of native drums—not the uncanny reverberation of the Juju-drum, though that still continued, temporarily half-heard, from the distance—but drums close at hand that beat in a quick monotony of rhythm to the weirdly lugubrious wailing of native horns, to wild cries and howlings beyond the stockade. The black soldiers jumped up from their cooking-fires, stood petrified in attitudes of alarm.

"There's that confounded witch-doctor again!" ejaculated Steevens.

"Wait!" said Bull, with a grim smile.

FOR a moment or two longer the clamour continued—and then it was shattered by the ragged crash of a rifle volley, repeated again and again at the other side of the stockade. Shrieks and yells started horridly through the night air in the brief intervals between the volleys, while the soldiers, at sharp words of command, sprang to their fighting stations. There was an immediate multiplication of irregular detonations, of excited, exulting yells, of half-heard screams, while rifle-flashes flickered like petty lightnings in the darkness beyond the tent.

The doctor glanced across at Bull, who went on with his supper like a general calmly confident that his orders are being obeyed, his battle efficiently conducted for him. He smiled at the questioning glance.

"Ambushed him!" he shouted through the din. "Told you I had a little surprise for him!"

For a minute or two longer the pandemonium of deafeningly close rifle-fire, shrieks, screams, and yells continued at full height, then it faded, died away, with one or two last shots, into silence. The foot-crunch of a squad of marching men approached the tent, stopped abruptly at a native-mouthed vociferation of "'Alt!" A gigantic negro, a sergeant's stripes on the sleeve of his uniform, stood framed in the opening of the tent. He grinned, his protruding lips splitting over white teeth from ear to ear, as he saluted and made his report in his uncouth language.

The officer nodded, satisfied, answered him with facile proficiency in the native tongue.

The sergeant turned, shouted to his squad the English words of command.

"Quick—march!——'Alt!"

In the triangle of the tent-opening appeared, his arms behind his back, and held by two scared-looking black privates, an immense and fantastically-bedizened negro. The great plumes upon his head added to his height, dwarfing his captors, and the grotesque paintings upon his face and body, down to the ceremonial skirt of coloured feathers crudely juxtaposed in mystic patterns, took from him the similitude of a man, gave him the appearance of a demon of a nightmare. He had been dancing a devil-dance of sorcery and the frenzy of the incantation was still on him. His eyeballs were still rolling like those of an epileptic and his mouth foamed over the paint which smeared his face.

The officer questioned him with a few sharply stern guttural words. The Juju-man, lost in his trance-like diabolic ecstasy, did not answer. Only on a peremptory repetition of the question did his epileptically rolling eyes come down to the two white men as though he then first perceived them. His expression underwent a sudden change. His face contorted horribly, his eyeballs protruded from his head, he seemed about to speak—then burst, instead, into a horrid hysterical laugh of ghastly mirth.

Bull shouted at him angrily. But the maniac laughter did not cease. The negro shook with it as it came peal on peal from his painted mouth, hideously grotesque in an unholy glee for which there was no visible occasion. Then, wrenching one arm free with convulsive strength, he pointed to between the two officers, rattled off some rapid excited gibberish, and burst again into diabolical and mocking laughter.

The officer's face set hard. He snapped out a curt order to the sergeant. The N.C.O. saluted, bellowed to his squad. The Juju-man was dragged away into the darkness. There was something bloodcurdling, uncannily sinister in its unquenchable mockery, about that laugh which continued even after he had disappeared. It made the doctor shudder.

"You're going to shoot him?" he queried. Comparatively limited as was his knowledge of the language, he had understood his comrade's order.

"On the spot. I'll show 'em whether a witch-doctor can't be killed."

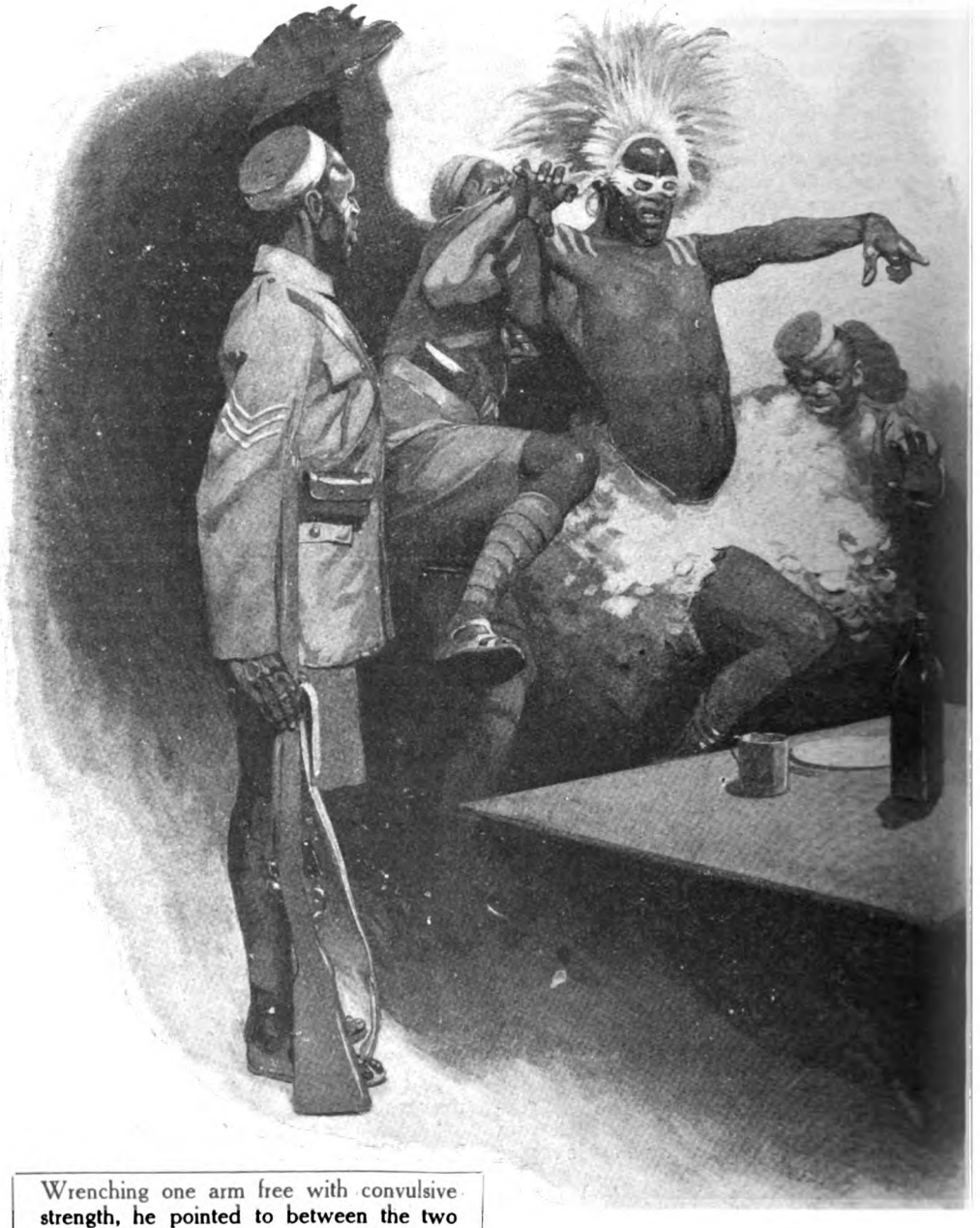
A minute later a volley crashed within the stockade.

"That's the end of him!" commented Bull, vindictively.

"WHAT was that he said—when he pointed? I didn't catch it," asked the doctor, helping himself to some sweet biscuits out of the tin.

Bull shrugged his shoulders.

"Some raving nonsense. Said he saw a skull between us or something of the sort. Tried to put the wind up us—that's how they do it with their own kind—just suggestion. Expects us to pine away now, I suppose—or rather fly at each other's throats like lunatics. That's what he hinted at. Forget it!"



Wrenching one arm free with convulsive strength, he pointed to between the two officers, and burst into mocking laughter.

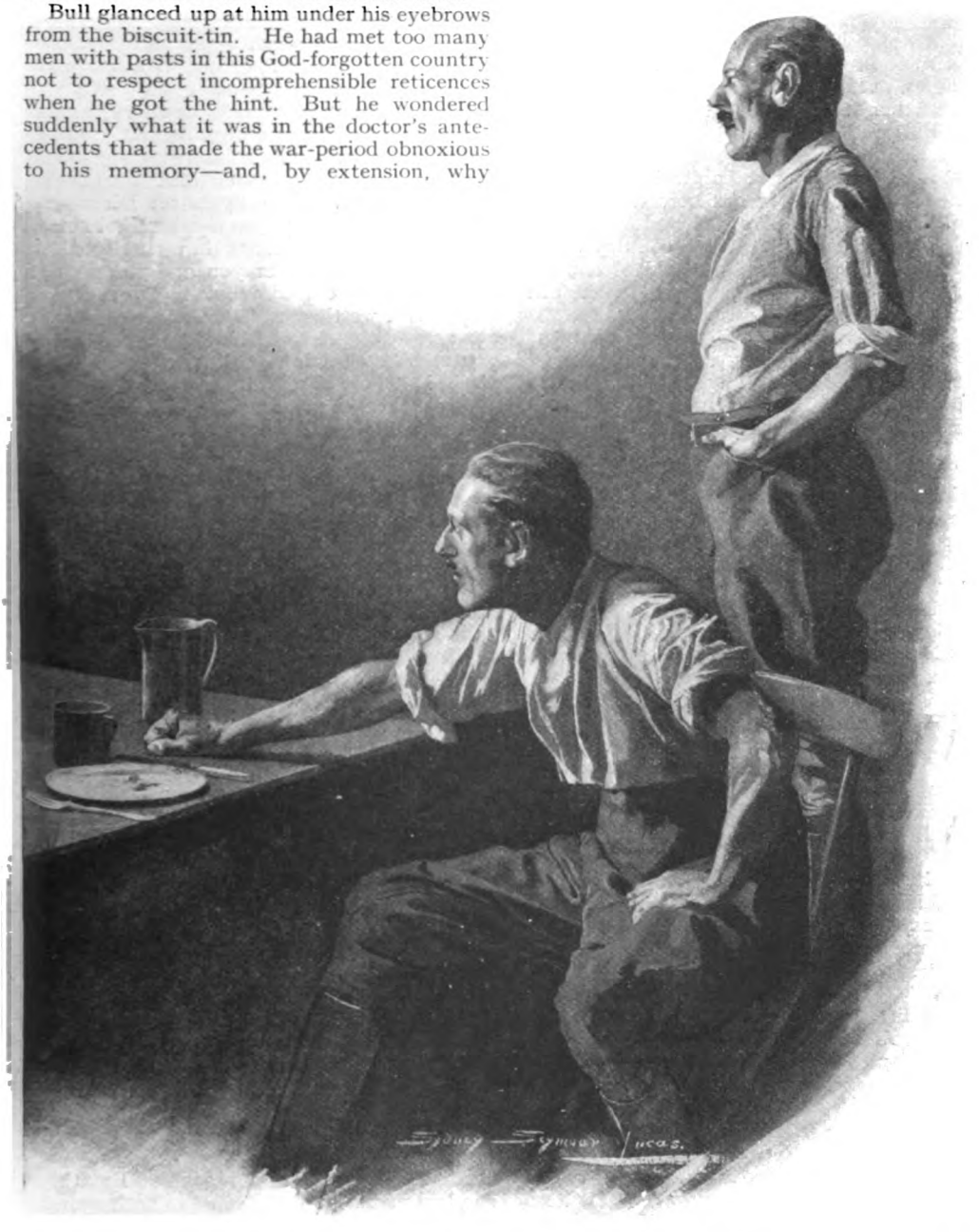
"It's a comment on our civilization, isn't it?" remarked the doctor, "that there's substantially no difference between a Bond Street medium—when he's genuine—and that fellow. Both work themselves up into an auto-hypnotic frenzy where the sub conscious mind runs riot."

"I suppose they do see things sometimes," said Bull, with indifference, searching carefully for a ginger-nut among the biscuits in the tin. "There was a Highlander chap in my regiment during the war, and he used to see shrouds round fellows who were going to get killed." He found the biscuit, looked for another. "Were *you* in the war, Doc.?"

"Yes," replied the doctor, with the curt

abruptness of a man who does not wish to enter into a new turn of the conversation.

Bull glanced up at him under his eyebrows from the biscuit-tin. He had met too many men with pasts in this God-forgotten country not to respect incomprehensible reticences when he got the hint. But he wondered suddenly what it was in the doctor's antecedents that made the war-period obnoxious to his memory—and, by extension, why



it was that a clever fellow like him, abnormally sober, should bury himself in the African bush. For three years before this, on his own showing, he had been roving all over the waste places of the world, as though in a flight from civilization. Some mystery about old Doc.! he thought. He looked an unhappy man, too, a man who goes about with a secret. He remembered suddenly that he had never seen him smile.

He voiced none of these thoughts, broke the doctor's tight-lipped silence with a

resumption of the evidently harmless subject. "I guess old Mumbo-Jumbo's decease has given our friends a nasty jolt," he said.

"Do they know?" asked the doctor.

"They do by this time—I told them to cut off his head and pitch it over the stockade. One of their scouts has certainly picked it up."

"Pleasant country!" commented the doctor.

"It's the Devil's own habitation," said the other. "I've seen things here that almost make you believe in spells and witchcraft and all the rest of it. It's a country where something Satanic can get hold of a man. You can feel diabolic influences in the air. I can to-night." He shuddered.

"It's that confounded drum," said the doctor. "I was hoping it would leave off after that little incident." The drum, uncanny and subtly menacing, still continued to throb in their ears, maddening in its insistence.

"Not a chance! They've mobilized half-a-dozen witch-doctors for a certainty—and they'll keep going till only a machine-gun'll stop the frenzy they've worked up. We're in for a hot time to-morrow, you can take my word for it."

The doctor filled his pipe, while the black soldier-servant cleared the table, left a bottle of whisky and two mugs between them, and went out.

"WELL," said the doctor, with an apparent equanimity at variance with the strain evident in his eyes, "I'm glad I've got you here. You're the fellow to teach 'em a lesson!"

Bull was pouring out the whisky.

"I don't want to throw bouquets about, but I'm glad I've got *you* here, Doc. I shouldn't have had a dog's chance with this sickness."

"Just as well we're both here," agreed the doctor. "We'll call it Providence. Here's how!"

Bull lifted his mug also.

"Here's to the old country!" he said, and drank the toast. "Doc., why in Heaven's name did you and I come to this cursed limbo of all wickedness?" He shuddered again. "It gives me the creeps to-night. I wish to God I could silence that infernal drum! I've been too long out here, I suppose. You know how fellows go black? I don't mind telling you—I have to fight it off sometimes. It sort of invades one. I'm almost as bad as a nigger when I listen to that drum—and I can't help listening to it. It gives me a funny sort of scared feeling—almost superstitious. As though those dancing Juju-men—I can see 'em—were really calling up evil spirits to wipe us out, as they think they are."

The doctor glanced at him keenly.

"Have a good go of quinine when you turn in to-night—and talk about something else now," he suggested.

Bull poured himself out some more whisky.

"Talk about the old country, shall we?" he said, taking a deep drink. "Lord, Doc.! can you imagine it—at this moment? Can you see 'em all, men and women in evening dress, and the lights on Piccadilly Circus? There they go, the lucky brutes, not in the least realizing how lucky they are—not a thought for you and me in the depths of this cursed jungle! Jove, Doc., why aren't we there with a little woman on our arm—going to a theatre perhaps—can't you see the electric signs blazing down the street? There are other things, too—things other chaps seem to get naturally just as if it were their right. I'd give a lot sometimes to be seeing the kids off to bed in the nursery, with—with someone I used to know, poor little woman! She'd have loved 'em too!" He sighed. "Were you ever married, Doc.?"

"Yes." The monosyllable was as curt as that which acknowledged his war-service.

Bull forbore to probe. He looked down a vista of his own memory and sighed again.

"I never married. But it wasn't my fault—nor hers either. Fate plays some fiendish little tricks on us poor mortals—catches you sometimes in a trap that seems specially laid for you. Don't you think so, Doc.?"

He stared out into the darkness beyond the tent where the black soldiers had settled again around their fires. The uncannily sinister throbbing of the distant drum filled the silence unbroken by any response from his comrade. He resumed on an impulse to talk that would help him to forget the spell that caught him when he listened.

"Well, I've known what a woman can be to a man, and that's something. But it was a funny business—with a rotten ending. D'you think a woman can love two men at once, Doc.?"

The doctor shrugged his shoulders.

"I've given up trying to understand women," he said.

"Yes. I suppose you're right. But this one haunts me—I feel I *ought* to understand her. Sometimes—you know what a man gets like when he's alone in this infernal country—I catch myself talking to her out loud. She's always with me—I have to prevent myself from believing in ghosts sometimes. I suppose it's because—well, I don't see why a man should be ashamed to confess it"—he spoke almost with defiance—"because I loved her as I've never loved a

woman before or since. And she loved me—I'm sure of it."

"What was wrong, then?" queried the doctor from out of preoccupations of his own.

"She was married. It was in 1916. I'd got pipped and was home on convalescent leave. I met her quite by accident and—you know all sorts of funny things happened during the war—I don't think there was a soul from first to last who had the least idea we even knew each other. When we met we vanished into a secret world of romance. The whole thing used to bewilder me."

"Why?"

"Well—I could never make out her attitude to her husband. She wouldn't even speak of him if she could help it. He was at the front, hadn't had leave for months. She was afraid of him, I could see that—but that wasn't all. I had a sort of feeling that she loved him too—in a different sort of way from loving me. With me, she just went mad. And then afterwards I'd catch her crying, and then she'd kiss me and try to laugh and tell me she'd given up everything in the world for me, so wasn't it obvious she loved me? But when I talked of arranging a divorce so that we could get married, she'd just sit miserable and silent and look at me as though she hated me. It was the end of it that fairly baffled me—has baffled me ever since."

"What happened?" said the doctor.

"Well, in due course I had orders to go out again, and the night before I went she had a wire to say her husband was coming home on leave. She was scared stiff. Of course, I consoled her—told her I should surely come back to her, as I had every intention of doing if I were alive. There was only one woman in the world for me. She pretended to believe it—gave me a charm that she said would always keep me safe." He twiddled a ring on his finger. "She'd had it blessed—she was a Catholic—said that wherever I was, if I remembered her with love, good influences would protect me. I've had so many near shaves since that I've almost come to believe it—who else should I think of in a tight corner? She had no fear for me, I'm sure of that. That doesn't explain the end."

"What was the end?"

"I didn't know myself till I was in the trenches a day or two later. We got the newspapers there, you remember. I was looking through one of them when her name caught my eye. It was the report of the inquest." He stopped, bit on his pipe-stem. "She had poisoned herself—before her husband's return. He told the coroner that he knew no reason for it."

He poured more whisky into his mug, drank it down. The sinister booming throb of the drum still filled the little silence. He stared in front of him, unaware of the doctor's eyes upon him.

"What was her name?" asked the doctor, quietly.

"Daphne." He answered mechanically, lost in his thoughts.

"I mean her surname?"

"Her surname?" He spoke still with his thoughts far away. "Stee——" The name, unfinished as it was, awoke something in him. He switched round to the doctor, his eyes staring, gasping with a sudden horror he would not yet admit to credibility. "Why—— Good God, man—it wasn't—you're not——?"

The doctor was looking at him with a face that seemed carved in stone, his hand on his revolver holster.

"Yes," he said, with grim succinctness.

"My God!" said the other, appalled. "My God!"

THE macabre reverberations of the insistent drum seemed to emphasize the diabolic irony of it.

"You're the man I've been looking for for six years," said the doctor, in a slow, quiet voice, charged full with deadly menace. "It happened just as you say—she was dying when I got home—and she confessed everything—everything except your name."

His fingers unfastened the strap of his holster, while his eyes held the other.

The man seemed oblivious to his peril.

"My God!" he said. "And I never connected the names! I never guessed!"

"Nor I," said the doctor, grimly. "But there it is. Your friend the witch-doctor saw something after all." He pulled out his weapon with a quick jerk.

Quick as he was, the other was as quick. A pair of revolvers confronted each other over that table. They looked into each other's unflinching eyes, each man's features sternly set, elemental hostility surging up in each. Neither quailed. The imminence of Death, sardonically dooming both, filled the little tent like an atmosphere. The maddening throb of that uncanny drum went on incessantly.

It was the officer who spoke.

"Steevens! Before God! it was you who killed her—not I. She was afraid of you."

"You lie!" said the doctor. "She loved me—before you soiled her soul. She died loving me. Go down to hell with that ringing in your ears!" His revolver pointed straight at the other's heart. The throbbing of that accursed drum, where foam-mouthed, grotesquely bedevilled Jujumen danced for the weaving of their spells, quickened suddenly in a paroxysm of rapid

rhythm, as though incantations mounted to a climax. Outside in the night a sentry challenged. Neither heard him.

"Move your trigger-finger and I fire!" said the officer. "We go together! And before we go, I tell you that it was I she loved. She was afraid of you. Without you she would have been my wife at this minute."

"Have you nothing better to say?" commented the doctor, grimly. "No prayers? I'm going to shoot you like a dog."

"I shoot the same instant," said the other. "I want to kill you every bit as much as you want to kill me. I've sworn it to her ghost a thousand times."

THERE was a pause.

"What are you waiting for?" said the officer.

"I don't want it to be too sudden," replied the doctor. "I've lived for this moment for six long years."

"It's mutual," was the grim reply.

They looked at each other across that table, each conscious of the little round black muzzle below the level of their gaze focused into each other's eyes, alert for the flicker in them that would fractionally precede the fatal double stab of flame.

It was the officer who spoke again.

"Steevens," he said, "I'm not quitting—but will you listen to something?"

The doctor's face did not soften.

"Be brief," he said.

The officer spoke over the unwavering level of his revolver.

"Steevens," he said, "we're both going we don't know where. We don't know what we're going to see—or whether we're going to see anything at all. Shall we look at her face for perhaps the last time—both of us?"

The doctor's grim features twitched.

"It's fair play?" he queried. "No tricks?"

"D'you think I'd soil her memory?" said the other, angrily.

Without taking his eyes from his adversary, he felt with his left hand inside his shirt, extracted a small photograph from some inner pocket. Then, suddenly reckless, he ignored his peril, gazed at it.

"God bless her!" he murmured, and kissed it.

"Drop that!" The doctor's voice was harsh.

Bull flung the photograph on the table.

"I give you the same privilege," he said. "You loved her too. Twenty seconds."

The doctor looked at it, made as if to touch it, drew his hand back

"I don't kiss that photograph," he said, with a catch in his throat.

Bull shrugged his shoulders.

"Ten seconds."

The doctor took his gaze from the photograph.

"Ten seconds it is." He levelled his revolver again. Outside, the sentry challenged once more, unheard by either. They sat in a silence filled only by that infernal reverberating tattoo. "By God!" he ejaculated, in exasperation, "that drum will drive me mad!"

Bull flung his revolver with a crash upon the table.

"It's driven us both mad!" he exclaimed. "Raving mad!"

The doctor indicated the abandoned weapon with the muzzle of his own.

"Two seconds to pick it up," he said, sternly. "It may as well be both of us."

"No!" cried Bull, jumping up from his seat as though to fling off a spell. "Do you realize what we're doing, Steevens? *We're throwing away the post!*"

The doctor looked at him, lowered his revolver reluctantly.

"My God!" he said, appalled by this larger issue he had forgotten.

Bull smiled grimly at him.

"Steevens," he said, "I'd die happy if I had put a bullet through you—but if you go, if either of us go, I wouldn't give tuppence for the chance of this post. We can't do it."

The doctor continued to stare at him. The drum throbbed madly.

"And I've waited six years—six years of hell—for this minute," he said.

Bull shrugged his shoulders.

"There's time enough," he replied. "That charming Juju-man spoke the truth. There's a dead woman between you and me. When we're relieved we'll settle our account."

"You mean," said Steevens, with bitter incredulity, "that you and I are to sit here side by side for a week—and keep our hands off each other?"

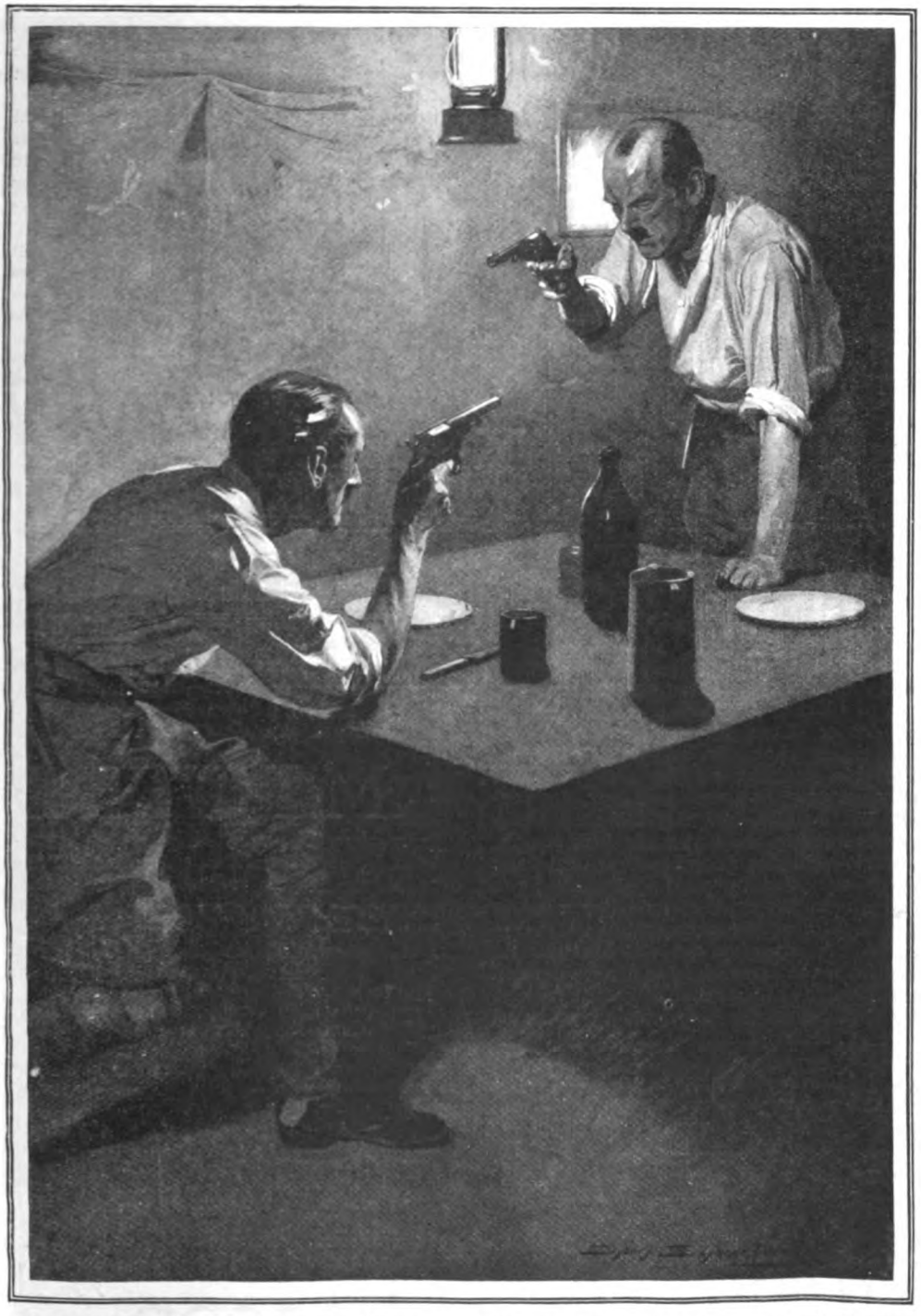
The grim smile came again on Bull's hard face.

"Just that," he agreed. "It's what the newspaper johnnies call shouldering the white man's burden."

The doctor jumped up.

"No!" he cried. "I'm not going to be tricked like this! One of us might be killed. I haven't waited six years for this minute to be baulked now! You have still your two seconds to pick up your gun—or die like a coward!"

Bull looked at him coldly. With an effort only observable from a tightening of his lips, he cleared his senses from the confusion of that incessantly-throbbing drum, fought back, just in time, a demon that leaped in him to run amok. It was not good to call Bull a coward.



They looked into each other's unflinching eyes. Neither quailed. The imminence of Death, sardonically dooming both, filled the little tent like an atmosphere.

"Very well, then, doctor. Just go outside and shoot or poison your patients first. They can't fight for their lives, and it's torture for them in the morning when the post falls. They're your pigeon. We'll quit our job as decently as we can."

The doctor wavered.

"Bull," he said, "that's fiendish of you."

"Not at all," was the grim reply. "I'm saving what I can of your professional honour. Run along and kill your patients. I'm ready for you when you've done it."

The doctor sank down again into his camp-chair, hid his face in his hands.

"You know I can't!" he said, miserably.

Bull shrugged his shoulders.

"There you are!" he commented. "We happen to be white men."

Steevens looked up with a haggard face.

"We stick it," he said. "Until we're relieved. And then, God help you!"

At that instant, with a slight zip! of pierced canvas, a spear came hurtling through the tent, stuck quivering in the table. It was the attack.

THE next half-hour was a wild chaos of surging tumult, of incessant detonations, of screams and yells in barbaric triumph or death-agony, a phantasmagoria of sudden perils where black men fought like demons in the light of blazing thatch. Twice Bull saved the doctor from a deadly spear-thrust by a timely shot. In an exultant release of all his faculties, he was everywhere at the point of most pressing danger, dominating the conflict, rallying his men, half-overwhelmed in the first rush, to a steady, regularly-volleying discipline that beat back the enemy yard by yard. At last, by a superhuman effort where he killed hand to hand to protect the team hastily setting up the tripod, dragging out the ammunition belts from the boxes, he got a machine-gun on to the flank of that mob of fanatic savages who had killed the sentries and swarmed into the stockade.

That machine-gun settled the business. Ruthlessly served, it rattled out annihilation. A minute or two of it—and the remnant scrambled over the stockade and fled.

Bull re-established his guards, repaired his defences, counted his casualties, and cleared the ground from the corpses that encumbered it. His men grinned happily as they showed him another fantastically-bedizened Juju-man among the slain.

These things took him some time. When he returned to the tent, he found Steevens there before him, helping himself to a drink with hands still blood-smeared from his surgery. The doctor looked up as he entered, drew himself erect, took a step towards him, probing him with deep-set eyes.

"You saved my life," he said.

Bull smiled queerly.

"What did you expect?"

The doctor turned and poured from the whisky-bottle into the other mug.

"Have a drink?" he offered, curtly.

Bull reached for the mug, hesitated.

"It's unusual, isn't it," he said, "—in the circumstances?"

The doctor looked at him.

"Have you got that photograph?"

Bull felt for it, produced it. Steevens took it, tore it up into small fragments.

Bull uttered an angry exclamation.

The doctor held out his hand.

"I've torn up"—he checked for a word—"the circumstances. Will you drink?"

Bull gripped the outstretched hand.

"Proud to," he said, simply.

With that assumption of nonchalance over deeper feelings typical of their breed, the two men raised their mugs silently to each other.

They listened to the challenges of visiting rounds. The last one ceased. Both were suddenly conscious of the silence.

"Thank God," said Bull, "that confounded drum has stopped!"

See back of frontispiece for important announcement regarding
H. de Vere Stacpoole's

SEQUEL TO

"The Blue Lagoon."

A BUDGET OF CHRISTMAS PUZZLES.

By

HENRY E. DUDENEY.

IT is to a happy thought on the part of my friend, Major Rackford, that I am indebted for this little budget of posers. It was Christmas week, and things were rather dull at the club one evening, so many members being away, when the Major turned to Dr. Bates and myself and said: "Why not come round to my place for a few hours? My son, Kenneth, is home from Oxford, and he has brought an undergraduate friend named Langford with him. They are hot on solving puzzles just at present, and I left them working at a very entertaining problem. Let's join them. I can at least promise that you shall not be bored."

We gladly accepted the invitation, and another member, Strangways, who dropped in at the moment, joined us.

The only other additions to the company were Mrs. Rackford and her daughter, Muriel. Some of the puzzles, of course, were not quite in their line, but they were always "interested spectators," and were clearly amused by the discussion. We sat round a large table in a very comfortable room, and there was an ample supply of paper and pencils.

"It looks like some serious committee meeting," said Mrs. Rackford. "Perhaps the chairman will call on the secretary to read the minutes."

"As there has been no previous meeting, there are no minutes to be read," the Major replied. "So we will at once proceed with the business before us. Kenneth, what were you working at when we came in?"

FIND THEIR AGES.

"SIMPLY this. A lady said that her husband's age is represented by the figures of her own age reversed. He is her senior, and the difference between their ages is one-fifth of their sum. For the life of me I cannot make it possible."

"I expect there are some horrid fractions in it," said Muriel.

"No," her brother assured her. "I was told that

the ages are whole numbers. The nearest I can get is 32 and 23. Their difference is 9, and their sum 55, but 9, unfortunately, is not a fifth of 55."

Langford said he had worked it out by algebra, and proved that it was impossible. But Dr. Bates made a happy suggestion, and the correct answer was soon found, to the amusement of all.

THE DONKEY-CART JOURNEY.

"THREE men," said Langford, "Atkins, Brown, and Cranby, had to go a journey of forty miles. Atkins could walk one mile an hour, Brown could walk two miles an hour, and Cranby could go in his donkey-cart at eight miles an hour. Cranby drove Atkins a certain distance and, dropping him to walk the remainder, drove back to meet Brown on the way and carried him to their destination, where they all arrived at the same time. How long did the journey take?"

"Of course, each went at a uniform rate throughout," said Strangways.

"But that is just what a donkey won't do," Mrs. Rackford insisted.

"Yet we must assume the fact," Langford explained.

IMITATIVE CHESS.

A CHESSBOARD was on the table with the pieces all set up for a game. So I asked Dr. Bates to play a game with the Major on these conditions: Whatever move Bates made throughout, with the white pieces, the Major must exactly imitate with the black, and Bates must give checkmate on the fourth move. As an experiment, Bates started off with 1. P to K 4, and Rackford replied with 1 P to K 4. Then Bates played 2. Q to R 5, and the Major had to reply with 2. Q to R 5. This gave me a good opportunity to explain that White cannot now play 3. Q takes Q, because it would be impossible for Black then to imitate the move. Neither could he play 3. Q takes P, check, because Black cannot do the same thing, as he would have to get out of check. White must always make a move that Black can copy, until the checkmate is actually given on the fourth move.

This puzzle caused great interest, and it was some time before somebody (I think it was Strangways) hit on a solution.

THE KNIGHT'S CENTURY.

THEN Dr. Bates drew on a large sheet of paper a reduced chessboard of twenty-five squares, and numbered it in the manner shown in our diagram. He then placed a chess knight on the central square,

13	42	31	44	33
46	33	42	13	44
42	13	21	13	46
31	46	11	31	11
33	33	13	46	13

which was not numbered, and asked us to make a series of knight's moves (as many as we chose, only never using the same square twice), so that the numbers on the squares used should add up to exactly one hundred.

Kenneth got very near it by taking the course indicated by the dotted line, for the numbers 42, 13, 13, 33, add up to 101, only one too many. A number of rough copies of the diagram were made, and the party worked for some considerable time, making haphazard trials and counts, all without success. But after a little figuring of my own, apart from the diagram, I was able to show them without any difficulty what is obviously the only possible solution. Perhaps the reader can find it.

A CHARADE.

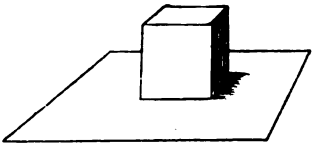
MRS. RACKFORD asked the company if they could give her the answer to the following charade:—

My *first*, you hear its sullen roar
When wandering by the ocean's shore.
My *second* in the gambler's art
Hath played no mean or paltry part.
But, fired with sordid thirst to win,
It often aids him in his sin.
My *whole* is something that is found
Upon the face of all around,
Yet if you take from me my face,
I sound a title commonplace.

When they had satisfactorily solved this little puzzle, the Major had one to propound.

THE STONE PEDESTAL.

"IN laying the base and cubic pedestal," said Major Rackford, "for a certain public memorial, the stonemason used cubic blocks of stone all measuring



one foot on every side. There was exactly the same number of these blocks (all uncut) in the pedestal as in the square base on the centre of which it stood. Look at this sketch that I have made and try to determine the total number of blocks actually used."

"The same number in the pedestal and the base, you say," put in Langford, "but how many blocks deep was the base?"

"Oh, I ought to have said only a single block in depth."

This was, of course, very quickly solved.

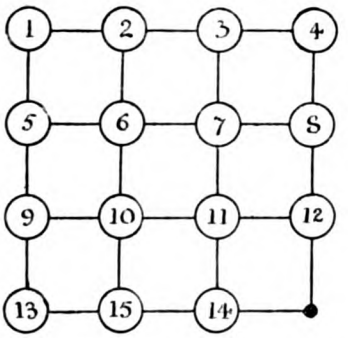
THE OLD FIFTEEN PUZZLE.

THEN Strangways made a diagram like our own and placed fifteen numbered counters as shown, leaving one point vacant.

"This," he explained, "is a convenient way of producing the old Fifteen puzzle, as the cubic blocks in a box are not available. You see that all the counters are in numerical order except the 14 and 15, which are exchanged. The puzzle is, by sliding one counter at a time along a line to a vacant point, to get 14 and 15 in their proper places—that is, the whole fifteen in proper order, with the identical point left vacant. Those of us who remember the old puzzle know that this is quite impossible."

"Then, I take it" said Kenneth, "it is equally impossible with the counters?"

"No." Strangways replied, "that is the point I



want you to consider. With the counters it can be done—by a trick. What is that trick?"

In due time he explained, and then they had no difficulty in getting the counters in proper order.

CRICKET AVERAGES.

"HERE is a curious little point," I said, "that has been frequently put to me of late. I wonder whether it will perplex any of you so much as it has done my correspondents? At the beginning of a cricket match two bowlers, whom we will call Haye and Bee, have each an average of 28 wickets for 60 runs. During the game Haye takes 1 wicket for 27 runs, and Bee takes 4 wickets for 36 runs. Which man has the best average at the end of the match? You may think it must be Bee, but look at these figures:—

	Wickets.		Runs.		Wickets.		Runs.
	28	for	60		28	for	60
	1	,,	27		4	,,	36
Haye	29	for	87	Bee	32	for	96

"Here, you see, the two total averages are exactly the same, for each can claim 1 wicket for every 3 runs."

"Yes, of course they are quite equal," said Langford.

"But how can that possibly be?" asked Kenneth. "At the start of the match they were equal, yet during the play Haye took 1 wicket for 27 runs, but Bee took the equivalent of 1 wicket for only 9 runs. Therefore Bee's score must show a better average than Haye's."

"I don't know anything about cricket," said Muriel, "but may I ask where they took the wickets?"

"Into the pavilion, of course, my dear," explained her mother.

"Quite right," said the Major, and everybody smiled approvingly. But the discrepancy to which I had drawn attention perplexed the party for some little time. Can the reader clear the matter up?

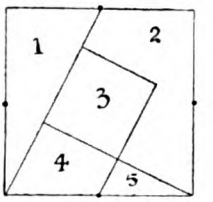
THE RECTANGULAR FIELD.

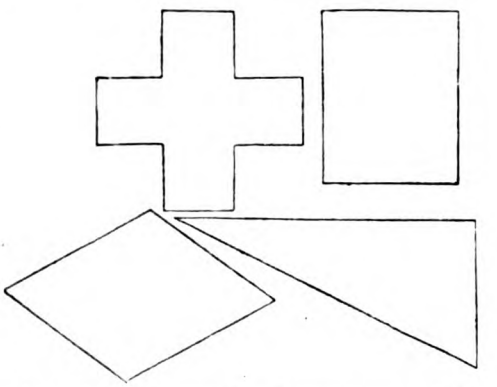
KENNETH then informed us that the distance round the four sides of a rectangular field is 140 rods, and the length of the diagonal 50 rods. He wanted us to tell him the area of the field. This was easy for the men, and while they were working out the answer Muriel and her mother were interested in watching Dr. Bates preparing the next puzzle.

FIVE FIGURES FROM FIVE PIECES.

"THIS is a little puzzle that I am sure will amuse the ladies" said Bates.

He had cut a square piece of cardboard into five pieces in the manner shown in the illustration. He explained that there is no difficulty in cutting out the pieces. Mark the middle point on each side of the square and the direction of the lines is obvious. He asked them to put those five pieces together so as to form in turn each of the other figures that I have reproduced from his sketch. It will be seen that they represent



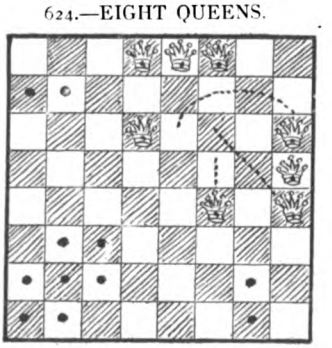


a Greek Cross, a rectangle, a diamond, and a right-angled triangle. Mrs. Rackford first succeeded in forming the last figure, though she wondered why it was called a "right-handled triangle." The other figures were duly formed after a little patient trial. Then the meeting broke up with a vote of thanks to the chairman for a most enjoyable evening.

(The answers to the above puzzles, with some new "Perplexities," will be given in our next issue.)

Solutions to Last Month's Perplexities.

624.—EIGHT QUEENS.



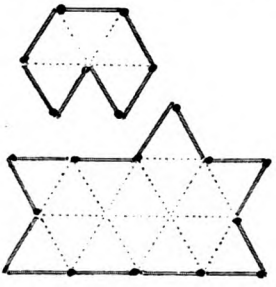
THE illustration shows how the eight queens may be rearranged so that a black king may be placed without being in check on any one of the eleven squares indicated by black dots. The dotted lines indicate

the three queen moves. The queen with the curved dotted line, of course, moves after the other one originally on the same row.

625.—THE FLOCK OF GEESE.

BROWN bought twenty-five geese at five shillings each, and meant to ask six shillings and threepence each

626.—TWENTY MATCHES.



THE illustration shows how two enclosures may be formed with thirteen and seven matches respectively, so that one area shall be exactly three times as large as the other, for one contains five of those little equilateral triangles and the other fifteen

627.—THE SOLITARY SEVEN.

THE restored simple division sum is as follows :—

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124)12128316(97809
   1116
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    968
    868
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628.—A REBUS.

THE words are PAT, TAP, and APT.

THE BEST MATCH TRICK IN THE WORLD.

How to form a true right-angle cross on the cantilever principle with two matches, as shown in Fig. 5. This trick was shown to the writer by an Indian coolie while on duty in Central India.

(1.) Hold the match between the points of the first finger and thumb of the left hand.

(2.) Lay the second match, at nearly right angles, across and on top of the first match, so that the junction of both matches may be held together.

(3.) Place the forefinger of the right hand in the top angle formed by the two matches and the thumb in the lower angle. The finger and thumb should enter the angles up to about the centre of the first and second joints.

1.

(4.) Bend the finger of the right hand so that the inside of the first joint presses behind the first match placed in position (see Fig. 1), and the top of the second match engages with the outside of the same finger just behind the second joint. At the same time turn the thumb to the left, so that the lower end of the first match rests against the outside edge of the first joint of the thumb, while the lower end of the second match is pressed back by the inside of the second joint of the thumb. This will form the right-angle cross as in Fig. 5.

2.

3.

4.

5.

The House of Pears

by

MAX PEMBERTON

In this article Mr. Max Pemberton tells something of the romantic story of the famous house of Pears, from the foundation of the business by Andrew Pears in the year 1789 to the present time.

I SUPPOSE there is no great business into whose story romance has not entered at some time or other. Turn the pages of musty books, and you shall find many a story of mean streets and a little endeavour and ultimate favour from that fickle dame whom the Romans named Fortuna—she with the cornucopia, or sometimes with the ball and wings. In the latter guise I am sure that old Andrew Pears would have preferred her, his ghost spying about the factory at Isleworth and his eyes upon that " transparency " which long has made history.

An eighteenth-century barber-surgeon, curling wigs and rouging cheeks in a little shop in Gerrard Street, Soho! And from his humble " pans," his stirrings and his strivings, his prattle to " my lady " and his hope for " my lord's " welfare—though for that, possibly, he did not care a scudo—from such a start the world-famous business of A. and F. Pears; the gigantic achievement which is almost without a parallel in the records of our trade—surely this is romance in the best sense of the word.

Turning over these mildewed pages, my first thought is that I should have liked to know old Andrew. He had but a humble parlour—yet how full of the sweet scents which conjure up the dreams. And what company the old dog must have kept—tweaking the nose of his Grace or hearing from the Duchess the true story of the duel. A courtly man, I make sure, proud, and properly proud, of his calling, knowing the secret thoughts in those heads his hair had been curled to cover—light of touch and witty of tongue, and always ready to whisper into the willing ear the pleasant story of his wares. Did my lady need attar of roses, it was costly, but it was there. A touch of a new powder for my lord's red nose! Ah, that port wine and its dyes which were not alkaline. And, of course, for both lord and lady there was this wonderful new soap of his, refined by his own skilled hands, a matchless soap for the complexion. Perhaps my lord had seen the advertisement in the *Morning Chronicle* or *Bell's Weekly Courier*. You see, old Andrew lived in Soho before the place had fallen to real decay. Gerrard Street was the identical thoroughfare wherein Sir Joshua Reynolds had started the Literary Club in the year 1764. Lord Mohun lived there, and from Gerrard Street had challenged the Duke of Hamilton to that famous duel. There also lived Edmund Burke and John Dryden, the Master; there were the homes of Charles and Fanny Kemble, as we know.

A gallant company, surely, and the very

people for old Andrew's wares. To be sure, he could not wash John Dryden, for John was long since dead—but which of the others could afford to despise the poor barber's soap, so attractive to the eye, so wonderful to wash with, so sweetly scented as to bring the very perfume of the garden to those mean houses? Andrew flourished as he deserved, but it was all modest enough. Just a humble beginning, a livelihood—a passport to the favour of the great, won by a man for whose very hair they sometimes neglected to pay.

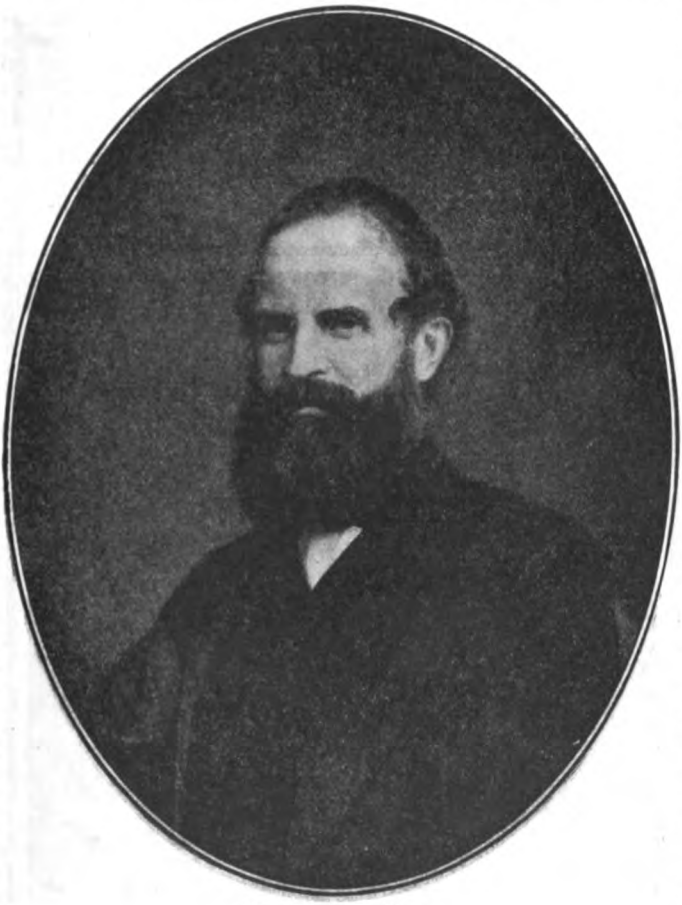
Mr. Andrew Pears, Senior, Founder of the Firm.

Unfortunately, we have no "confessions" from this honest barber, and Mme. de Genlis appears to be left in undisputed mastery of the field. All that we know is that Master Andrew Pears did very well with his soap refining, that he advertised it modestly in a few of the daily and weekly papers of his time, and that, having moved to Wells Street out of Oxford Street, where the wonderful church music used to come from, he settled finally in Great Russell Street, where another designer of balls—but those upon domes and steeples—Sir Christopher Wren—had lived before him. Here, in the year 1835, he took into partnership his grandson, Francis Pears, thus founding a tradition which has endured; for in the main this great business has ever been one of family continuity, and to-day one of Andrew's descendants still sits cheek by jowl with the "direction," the liaison between the soap and the family having been unbroken for more than a hundred years.

Let it be repeated that during all these early endeavours in Soho and Bloomsbury the enterprise had been of a modest character. Old Andrew had no far vision, neither had his grandson. He made his beautiful soap by hand, and he made it for the "quality." Had you suggested that the walls be placarded with exclamations or pictures of rude boys in primitive baths, perchance he would have been much affronted. "Good morrow, hast thou used Pears' Soap, my lord?" obviously would not have been a question he could have asked of his patrons, for in that age, when cleanliness was very far from godliness, the answer possibly would have been in the negative. Did not an Oxford Don at that very period chide a fellow of the "House," who suggested that baths should be installed in the college, with the reminder that the young gentlemen were up but for eight weeks? What need, then, of baths? Andrew, we think, would have hated the idea that his dainty cakes should have fallen into the black hands of the *canaille*. Rather he whispered his insinuations into the well-shaped ears of lords, or would murmur a word of saponaceous worthiness to my lady with the lip-salve on her fingers. Indeed, he seems to have had a real fear of what in these days we call publicity.

All that was to be changed later on—in the year 1865, to be precise—when a certain agile young man, one Thomas J. Barratt, married into this transparently honest family and finally embarked his fortunes

in the venture. He came, as we say now, at the psychological moment—a man not before his time, but just in the nick of time. In a twinkling this clever youth perceived the nature of the commodity with which he had to deal. He came quickly to the conviction that old Andrew's soap was all that Andrew claimed it to be; that it had no rival for purity; that the refiner's work did make of it something which no other manufacturer was making—and, with confidence for his creed, he set out upon his task. He would advertise, he declared, as no soapmaker had ever advertised before. His very enthusiasm seems to have frightened the old gentleman out of his wits. What would her Grace say? And my lord who had learned to wash? Francis retired incontinently from the business, leaving four thousand pounds of his precious capital as a loan, and the decks were now clear for Andrew Pears the second, the great-grandson of the Founder, and Thomas J. Barratt to begin.



Mr. Francis Pears.

Some of us are old enough to remember the first excitements of that stirring campaign. We carry our minds back to the declining years of the great Victorians and a pageant of display is recreated for our delight. I was at school when Henry Ward Beecher, the great American divine, made a grab at immortality by writing the first testimonial to a soap ever given by the Soapy Sam of New York. Ten years later the same preacher rubbed in the words once more, and canonized both A. and F. Pears as means of grace. There followed more beautiful things, and humour; perchance in Mr. Harry Furniss's drawing of the tramp, who "used your soap two years ago, since when I have used no other," the most humorous drawing ever given to the public. Thomas J. Barratt was not the man to lose a thing like that. He had tough work to persuade Messrs. Agnew to part with it—another tough job when he cajoled Sir John Millais to part with the copyright of "Bubbles," but his was a silvern tongue, and, after all, Pears' Soap was not a vulgar thing, but suggested of itself the romance of an age of courtliness and splendour, and the dressing-rooms of queens. Always a royal soap, why should painters be degraded by helping to make the fact known? Sir John Millais soon came to see this, and his satisfaction at the way his beautiful picture was reproduced remained to the end—indeed, he was actually in negotiation with Messrs. Pears for another picture at the time of his lamented death.

I do not purpose to make a catalogue of these unrivalled advertising adventures, but the stories of some of them are in themselves romances.

Take, for instance, the affair of Giovanni Focardi and "You Dirty Boy." Like Oliver Goldsmith in Bell Court, Giovanni appears to have been starving in a garret in Preston. Brought down to the dregs of coffee, he dared to face his landlady one

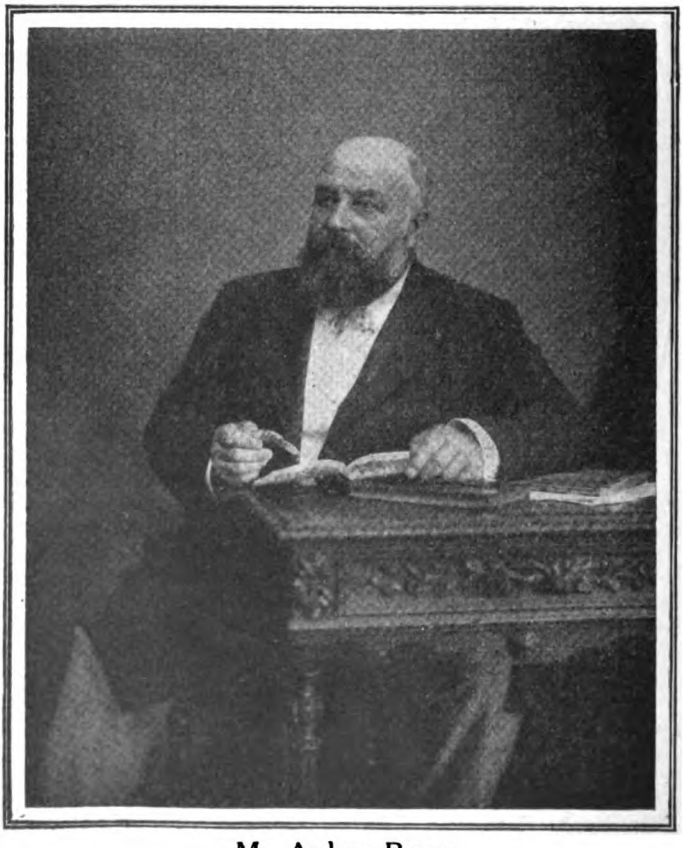
morning to see if there were but a bone in that humble cupboard—but lo and behold! she of the cat and the carping tongue was at that very moment scrubbing, with a soap which old Andrew would have spurned, a miserable urchin whose vile body had been inserted in a mean pail of tin. What a picture, thought Giovanni, his artistic temperament prevailing above his hunger. He would model it in clay, send a cast of it to Paris and another to Italy.

There followed the coincidence of Thomas J. Barratt being in France at the very time this most humorous exhibit was winning the praise of Parisians. Swift negotiations followed, and soon the Londoner stood in Oxford Street to gaze upon "You Dirty Boy," and, perhaps, to admire the beauty of the sculpture. What a droll thing and how instantaneously it appealed to the man—even more to the woman—upon the pavement! There was stark humanity here, as there was in "He Won't be Happy till He Gets It." At first, we are told, this picture was called "The Knight of the Bath," but the public would have none of it under that title, and in a happy moment the correct wording was found. Henceforth the public of the pavement loved it truly. There was not a mother among them, even she who had but just quitted Master Barleycorn, who did not swear that it was "lovely."

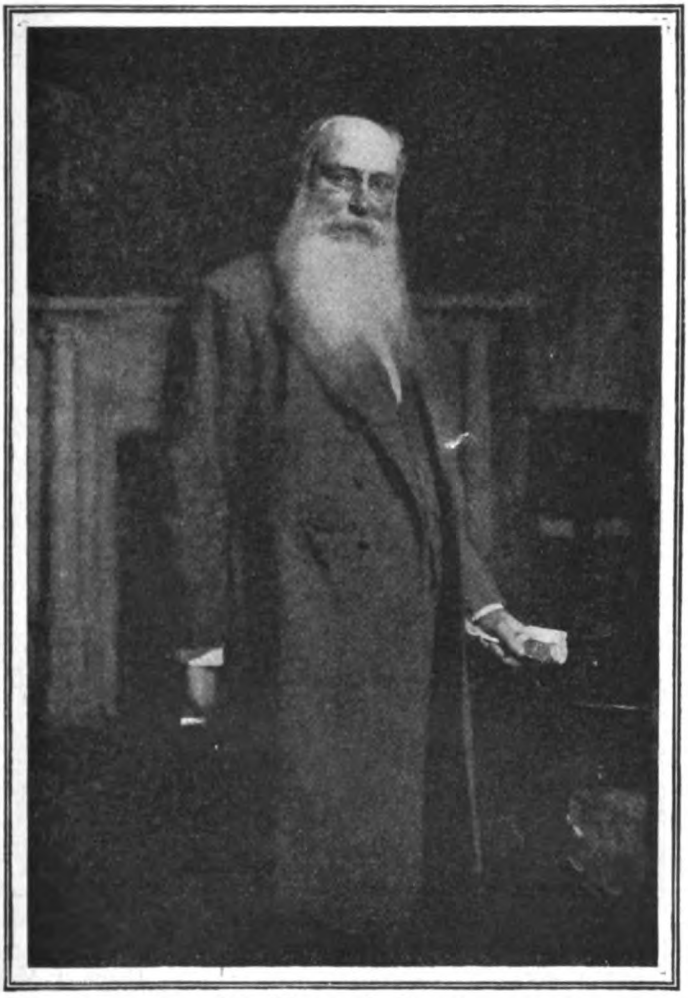
For many of us, perchance, these things were for a long while but pleasant objects of the countryside. It seemed to us, perhaps, that whenever we looked up from our newspapers in a train we were confronted with autographs of this wonderful family of Pears. Curiosity must have followed after. What was Pears' Soap really, and for what Christian names did the letters A. and F. stand? We did not know that almost a hundred years before that time old Andrew had taken a goose quill into his polished fingers and tenderly inscribed each packet of his precious soap as though it were a casket of jewels. We thought there must be a vast factory somewhere, and, of course, we gabbled about the hundreds of thousands the Pears people must be spending. Naturally there followed a new interest in the soap itself. We bought it and discovered that it filled our dressing-rooms with sweet perfumes. It was unlike anything we had used before. Yet of where and how it was made none of us had the remotest idea.

For myself, I like to think of this continuity of name, of idea, and of process which has characterized this great business from the outset.

Old Andrew, as you know, made all his soap laboriously by hand. Perhaps it is true to say that he was rather a refiner than an actual manufacturer. To-day the soap is not made by hand: but the care in all the processes employed is exactly what it was in Andrew's time. Visit the great factory at Isleworth and you will become aware of this. You will see that Pears' Soap is so beautifully transparent just because infinite care is taken in the selection of raw materials used and because the soap



Mr. Andrew Pears.



Mr. Thomas J. Barratt.
From a Painting by Solomon J. Solomon, R.A., P.R.B.A.

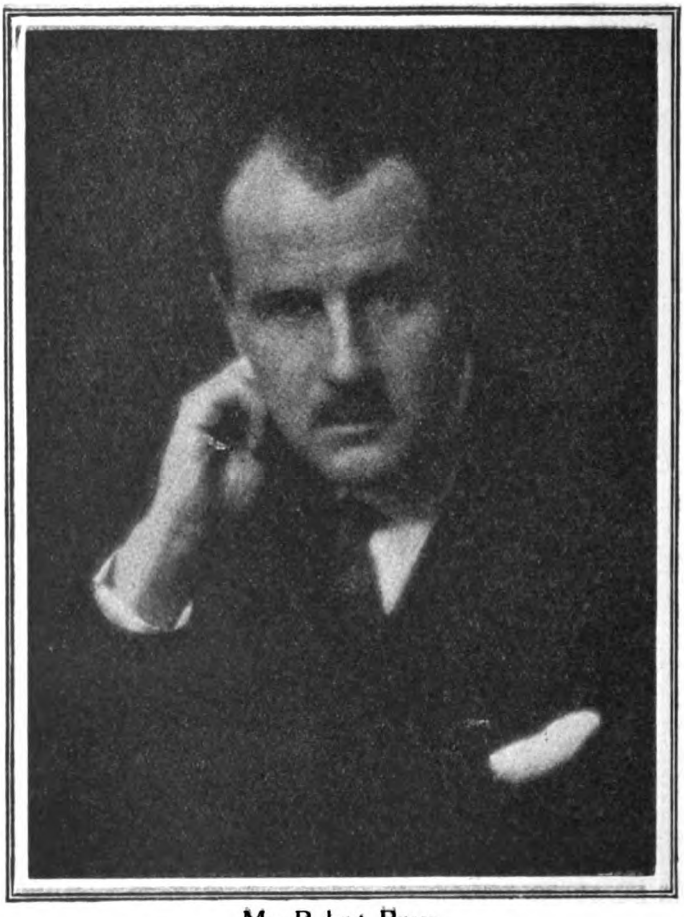
is refined by a unique process. That is what old Andrew did so well. He refined his soap with glycerine and perfumed it with the rarest scents. Attar of roses, of course, was his real stand-by, as it is wherever the luxury of perfume is sought; but scents of all kinds naturally assist the famous "Golden Series" of toilet requisites for which the firm has become renowned today, and their wonderful factory seems in places to waft all the seductive odours of a Southern garden.

This, be it said, is not supposed to be an age of masculine indulgence where the ancient arts of the dressing-room are concerned. A perfumed man is the ultimate abomination. We leave to mere youth the gorgeousness of silks and satins and the glory of the perfect bow, yet in my experience there never was an age when most men were more finicking about the soaps and powders they use, nor more willing to hear of novelty in this respect. Witness their massagings, their rubbings with fine oil, the arguments they will sustain anent the excellence of this or that safety razor, their faith in antiseptics, their almost feminine care of their skins. And assuredly their dressing-rooms suffer nothing by comparison with those of a hundred years ago. Indeed, I am inclined to think that if the spirit of old Andrew ever revisits New Oxford Street, it must hover questioningly about the beautiful boxes which speak so eloquently of human vanity in this age of supposed barbarism.

For Andrew, of course, does revisit New Oxford Street in spirit as do the wraiths of a long line of Pears long since gone to their rest. In their lifetime many of them dwelt in that comfortable old house by the works at Isleworth—named Lanadron, after the Cornish farm of Andrew's father—and there the working of pans was more to them than gold or marble; the refining of soap a better thing to live for than the gaping of crowds who worshipped "Bubbles" or guffawed at the antics of the "Dirty Boy." None of us, I think, can pass that wonderful building without some reverence paid to the magic of its story and the unexampled success for which it stands. Here, we shall say, the first victories of stupendous advertising were won. In that board-room were planned the schemes which decorated countless hoardings, made beautiful many a dingy wall, and sent the names of A. and F. Pears to the utmost confines of the known globe. In that counting house were drawn the cheques, for sums often in excess of one hundred thousand pounds a year, which financed this amazing campaign and answered without further

ado the question concerning its success. These halls of splendour the older generation of Pears visited at intervals, but the new generation is there to-day to stand for them, faithful to old tradition that Pears' business must still be carried on in Pears' own way.

I could not close these notes upon this engrossing romance without some memory of that wonderful "Pears' Annual" which has delighted us all for so many years. Not many days ago Mr. Pears himself was chiding me for a hankering after the flesh-pots of Christmas, which he seemed to think were as dead as Queen Anne.



Mr. Robert Pears.

An age which lives for the fox-trot does not care tuppence for snow upon the tree-tops, and would be bored to death in the kitchen of Dingley Dell. Gone are the wassail bowls and boars' heads carried upon high. No waits move us to hilarity, and we take tabloids in lieu of Christmas pudding. All this may be true, and yet I recall some of these old Pears' Annuals as the delights of a forgotten youth. The wonderful pictures they gave us, the romance, the Victorian honesty of beef and pudding. And the excellence of some of the story-telling for it—Frank Dadd, T. C. Dollman, Hugh Thomson, Will Owen, Maurice Greiffenhagen, Gordon Browne, Barry Pain, Pett Ridge, Cutcliffe Hyne, George R. Sims, and many another—we see the pity of throwing it upon the table at Christmastide and letting Twelfth Night burn it. Now we shall have it without the brand of holly and mistletoe, and engaging enough I am sure we shall find it.

For it also will lead us gently by the hand, through the halls of time and of romance, back to the courtly barber in reverence; and before his pans we shall make obeisance. A splendid fellow, truly, for has he not washed the face of mankind and discovered its "beauty"? To Pears, then—both A. and F.—let this tribute stand.

—eternal romance which I venture to believe will still be very much alive when fox-trots are not even a memory.

"Pears' Annual" henceforth, I am told, is to be a real Annual, something we shall be able to read all the year round and to keep upon our bookshelves. The unfailing excellence of it surely justifies this claim to permanence. When we remember the names of those who have written and drawn

May she ask him in?

The problem is:—They were introduced at a dance. Now he has walked home with her and given her a beautiful box of "Viking" Assorted Chocolates—evidently a man of good judgment and taste. Surely there would be no harm in presenting him to the family?

Prizes Offered.

Give your idea (in 50 words or less) of what she may do, and why; send with a ticket from inside a 1-lb. or ½-lb. box of Barker and Dobson "Viking" Chocolates Assorted, not later than December 30th.

£2 2s., £1 1s., 10/6 and 5/- Boxes of Chocolates will be given for the best answers. Our decision final. Mark envelope "'Strand' Problem."

BARKER & DOBSON, Ltd., Liverpool, England.

"Viking" Chocolates are sold in ½-lb., 1-lb., and 2-lb. boxes, at 2/6, 5/-, and 10/-. Also by weight at 1/3 per ½-lb.

Barker & Dobson

VIKING CHOCOLATES

ASSORTED

CLEMAK Safety Razor

—and such a shave.

Popular Set	7/6
Stropping Machine ..	5/6
Combination Outfit ..	12/6
"Clemak" Shaving Brush	3/6
Imperial Outfit ..	25/-

ON SALE EVERYWHERE.

CLEMAK SAFETY RAZOR CO., 56, KINGSWAY, LONDON.

To face end of Text.

Secrets of Beauty

THE CREAM OF
MODERN BEAUTY ADVICE

By MIMOSA.

A "Blackhead" Secret.

BLACKHEADS, oily skins, and enlarged pores usually go together, but can be instantly corrected by a unique new process. A tablet of stymol, obtained from the chemist, is dropped in a tumbler of hot water, which will then, of course, "fizz" briskly. When the effervescence has subsided the face is bathed with the stymol-charged water and then dried with a towel. The offending blackheads, of their own accord, come right off on the towel, the large oily pores immediately contract and efface themselves naturally. There is no squeezing, forcing, or any drastic action. The skin is left uninjured, smooth, soft, and cool. A few such treatments should be taken at intervals of three or four days thereafter in order to ensure the permanence of the pleasing result so quickly obtained.

Grey Hair—Home Remedy.

THERE are plenty of reasons why grey hair is not desirable, and plenty of reasons why hair dyes should not be used. But, on the other hand, there is no reason why you should have grey hair if you do not want it. To turn the hair back to a natural colour is really a very simple matter. One has only to get from the chemist two ounces of concentrate of tammalite and mix it with three ounces of bay rum. Apply to the hair with a small sponge for a few nights and the greyness will gradually disappear. This liquid is not sticky or greasy and does not injure the hair in any way. It has been used for generations with most satisfactory results by those who have known the formula.

To Kill Roots of Superfluous Hair.

WOMEN annoyed with disfiguring growths of superfluous hair wish to know not merely how to temporarily remove the hair, but how to kill the hair roots permanently. For this purpose pure powdered pheminol may be applied directly to the objectionable hair growth. The recommended treatment is designed not only to instantly remove the hair, but also to actually kill the roots so that the growth will not return. About an ounce of pheminol, obtainable from the chemist, should be sufficient.

The Real Cause of Most Bad Complexions.

IT is an accepted fact that no truly beautiful complexion ever came out of jars and bottles, and the longer one uses cosmetics the worse the complexion becomes. Skin, to be healthy, must breathe. It also must expel, through the pores, its share of the body's effete material. Creams and powders clog the pores, interfering both with elimination and breathing. If more women understood this there would be fewer self-ruined complexions. If they would use ordinary mercolized wax instead of cosmetics they would have natural healthy complexions.

A Strange Shampoo.

I WAS much interested to learn from this young woman with the beautiful glossy hair that she never washes it with soap or artificial shampoo powders. Instead she makes her own shampoo by dissolving a teaspoonful of stallax granules in a cup of hot water. "I make my chemist get the stallax for me," said she. "It comes only in ¼-lb. sealed packages, enough to make up twenty-five or thirty individual shampoos, and it smells so good I could almost eat it." Certainly this little lady's hair did look wonderful, even if she has strange ideas of a shampoo. I am tempted to try the plan myself.

The unseen hands of PADEREWSKI

play to you on the new 'Pianola' Piano ('Duo-Art' Recording Model). Although not present it is nevertheless his fingers that operate the keys precisely as they did when, through an ultra-sensitive device, they cut the original roll. Nothing is added, nothing is lost—it is just Paderewski and instantly recognisable as such.

The individual playing of all the other prominent pianists is equally available through the medium of this wonderful new 'Pianola' Piano.

The new PIANOLA PIANO

('DUO-ART' REPRODUCING MODEL)

supersedes all other types of piano-playing instruments. It is a piano of exquisite tone for ordinary use, a 'Pianola' on which you can play ordinary music rolls to your individual taste, and it is a medium through which you can hear in your own home the characteristic playing of the great masters.

Paderewski's tribute to the new 'Pianola' Piano ('Duo-Art' Model):

"This instrument is without question greatly superior to any other of its kind, and I shall be glad indeed to have my playing reproduced with such manifest fidelity"

(Signed) I. Paderewski.

A Special Allowance Scheme Brings the 'Duo-Art' Within Easy Reach

of all who already own 'Pianola' Pianos, player pianos or pianos. In order that owners of these may benefit by the latest development of the 'Pianola' it has been decided to make a special exchange allowance upon customers' present instruments which are replaced by the 'Duo-Art' Model. This, together with our individual system of instalment payments, makes it an easy matter to acquire the new 'Pianola' Piano.

To obtain full details of this scheme and catalogues send name, address and particulars of present instrument, or, if possible, call at Aeolian Hall.

The 'Duo-Art' Model is embodied in the famous Steinway, Weber and Steck Pianos.

The AEOLIAN Co LTD

AEOLIAN HALL

NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1.

AND NEW YORK, PARIS, MADRID, BERLIN, MELBOURNE, SYDNEY & ADELAIDE.

OFFICERS' ARMY TRENCH COATS

THE GENUINE "WESTO" TYPE 70/-

Post Free in Great Britain.

(Without Detachable Fleece Lining **55/-** each.)

These goods can never be duplicated at the price.

WE have foreshadowed for some time in our advertisements that the stock of Government Material for Officers' Army Trench Coats was becoming rapidly exhausted. That time has nearly arrived, and in order to rapidly clear our remaining stocks we have reduced our price to the above amazing figure. The price of raw materials used in the manufacture of these coats is rapidly increasing, and therefore at a very early date these coats will not be obtainable under **FIVE GUINEAS.**

Brand New, Tripleproof Gabardine, check lining, **oilskin *inter*-lining,** and with detachable **All-Wool** fleece lining. **Four Coats in one.**

These Coats are impervious to weather. Worn with the fleece lining, they combine the warmth and comfort of an ulster with the rain-resisting qualities of a stout mackintosh. With this lining detached they are a light, elegant raincoat. Thousands of officers and ex-officers testify to their worth. They will last for years—even war conditions could not wear them out.

This is the only coat made with surplus Government materials, which we control.

POINTS FOR TRENCH COAT BUYERS.

1. A Genuine Officer's Army Trench Coat made with Government Surplus materials. Will last for years. An inferior one will "crock up" in a few months.
2. See that the fleece lining is ALL-WOOL.
3. See that the fleece lining extends down the sleeves to the wrist.
4. See that the interlining is oilskin or oil cotton and not a rubber solutioned fabric which is perishable.
5. See that you deal with a "MONEYBACK" firm, so that if the coat does not meet with these requirements you can demand a refund.

OUR GUARANTEE.

We guarantee this coat to be as described above and that the description is in no way exaggerated. If the customer is not satisfied with his purchase we guarantee to return his money in full without question provided the coat is returned undamaged and unworn within seven days of purchase.

MONEYBACK PRINCIPLE.

All our business is conducted on the "Moneyback" principle. Inasmuch as a Mail Order Customer has no opportunity of inspecting his goods before purchasing, this is the only fair and satisfactory way of conducting a Mail Order Business. An announcement such as ours forms a legal contract between the Seller and the Purchaser, and therefore fully protects the latter.

Chest Sizes, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 ins. When ordering state height and chest measurement over waistcoat.

PATTERNS SUPPLIED BEFORE PURCHASE IF DESIRED.

Cheques, Money Orders and Postal Orders should be crossed Barclays Bank, Limited. Treasury Notes should be registered.

GEORGE WESTON & CO.,

Clothing Contractors, "Moneyback" Merchants,

DEPT. S.M., "WESTO" HOUSE, HOUNSLOW, MIDDLESEX.

JACKSONS GUARANTEE SATISFACTION BY POST

SAVE MONEY BY BUYING DIRECT FROM MANUFACTURERS

You can order by post from Jacksons with just as much certainty of satisfaction as though you bought the goods in one of Jacksons' shops, because Jacksons guarantee the fit, style and quality of everything they sell.

Jacksons' direct-by-mail method of selling will save you pounds, as all intermediate profits are abolished and you buy at the manufacturers' **one-profit** prices. Compare the prices and quality of the goods offered in this advertisement and calculate how much dealing with Jacksons will save you.

There are Jacksons' retail branches in all large towns, but if you cannot conveniently call, send your order by post, and get the goods by return. Jacksons' Mail-order Catalogue will be sent on request.

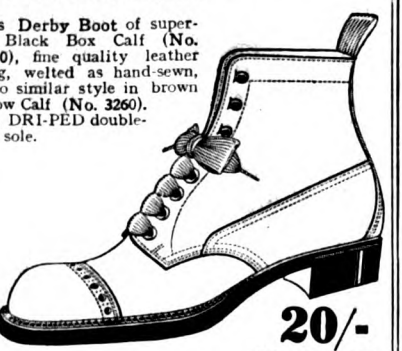
SOLED WITH DRI-PED REG°

The Super-leather for Soles.

Ladies' comfortable Gibson Shoe (No. 71416) of super-fine Black Box Calf, with suède lined quarters, welted as hand-sewn, self cap. DRI-PED double-wear sole.

20/-

By post 9d. extra



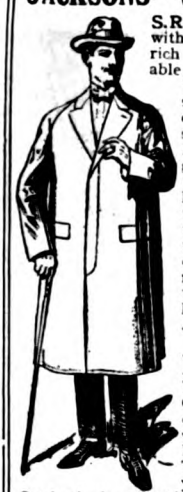
Men's **Derby Boot** of super-fine Black Box Calf **(No. A9210)**, fine quality leather lining, welted as hand-sewn, —also similar style in brown Willow Calf **(No. 3260)**. With DRI-PED double-wear sole.

20/-

By post 1/- extra

DRI-PED SOLE LEATHER MEANS DOUBLE WEAR.

JACKSONS "SUPER-RESISTRA."



S.R. 2. Very dressy Coat, with stylish hang and fit, rich slate grey shade, suitable evening or general wear. Three seam sleeves, ensuring easier fit; bluff edged fronts. Fly front, seam and vent at back. Front inter-lined high-grade hair cloth for retention of shape. Flat horizontal pockets, inside ticket pocket, lined throughout proofed material. To ensure deep, even tone, dyed in raw material stage. Scientifically proofed to the highest degree known. *By post 1/- extra.* **£3 3 0**

Ladies' Raincoat, L 126. Ladies' Woollen Gabardine **Coats.** Exceedingly smart coats in woollen Gabardine Twill, in Fawn, Navy and Olive shades. The material is proofed in the yarn and is rainproof yet porous. **Cut in single or double-breasted styles, with or without belt. All sizes.** *By post 1/- extra.* **45/-**

Best quality English all fur **Velour** in grey, fawn, maize and black.

10/6 to 21/-

A special line of hard-wearing **Velours** in above colours.

8/11

The **"Blankney" Hat** in grey and fawn-bound edge.

6/11

The **"Prince" Hat,** in good quality light grey felt. An excellent wearing hat.

8/11 & 10/6

By post 1/- extra.

FREE, and post free. Jacksons' fully illustrated catalogue of Ladies' and Gent's Hats, Boots, Shoes and Raincoats. Ordering by post made safe and easy by Jacksons' mail order method. A postcard will bring you a copy by return.

WHEN ORDERING give full particulars—quote reference number or name of article required. Enclose remittance with your order and include cost of postage. **Satisfaction guaranteed or money returned.**

JACKSONS Ltd.

Dept. 14, Victoria Works,

STOCKPORT, England.

BRANCHES IN ALL LARGE TOWNS.

Px.2

If you tire quickly, feel depressed or run-down—

Take advantage—to-day—of the new health Wincarnis offers you.

Let Wincarnis banish that feeling of exhaustion—dispel that cloud of depression—and revive your run-down vitality.

Remember that Wincarnis is a Tonic, a Restorative, a Blood-builder, and a Nerve-invigorator—all combined in one rich, delicious, health-creating preparation.

That is why Wincarnis gives *new strength* to the weak—*new rich, red blood* to the anæmic—*new nerve force* to the nervous and depressed—and *new vitality* to those who are run-down, or enfeebled by old age, or striving to regain new health after an exhausting illness.

And that is why over 10,000 Doctors have recommended Wincarnis.

If you tire quickly—feel depressed—or are weak, anæmic, nervous or run-down—take advantage of the new strength and new vitality Wincarnis offers you. But be sure you get Wincarnis. If you want to get well—*shun* substitutes.

SEND FOR FREE TRIAL BOTTLE.

If you prefer to "try before you buy," we invite you to send for a free trial bottle. Enclose five penny stamps (to pay postage).

COLEMAN & CO., LTD., WINCARNIS WORKS, NORWICH.

Small size 3/3

All Wine Merchants and licensed Chemists and Grocers sell Wincarnis.

Large size 6/-

WINCARNIS

"The Wine of Life."

A Christmas gift of real utility for yourself or your friends.

"THE AMATEUR MECHANIC"

THE book that teaches in simple "can't go wrong language" how to do 400 money-saving home jobs. Written by over 50 experts, and illustrated by 6,000 photographs and diagrams. Follow the instructions and everything comes out exactly right.

Mr. W. WALLACE, Dundee, writes:—
"I am more than satisfied with my bargain. These books contain a very valuable store of information so clearly defined that the merest novice can understand it."

Mr. P. SMITH, Dalston, London, writes:—
"I thank you for the businesslike way you have treated me. I am more than pleased with these books. They are first-class; everything is made so plain, and the designs are splendid. A father wishing to give his son a present cannot do better than buy 'THE AMATEUR MECHANIC.'"

A FEW OF THE JOBS IT TEACHES EVEN THE MOST UNHANDY TO DO.

To paint and paper a room—To sole and heel and patch boots and shoes—To make a pair of hand-sewn boots—To restore colour to old brown shoes—To make household furniture—To re-seat chairs—To upholster sofas, etc.—To instal a speaking-tube—To clean a Primus or other stove—To repair bicycles—To overhaul a motor-car—To repair motor-cycles—To work in metal—To colour metals—To make a garden frame—To repair water-taps—To varnish a violin—To remedy damp walls—To repair the piano—To make a padded chair from an old cask—To stuff animals—To dress furs—To stuff and mount birds—To do wood inlaying—To cure a smoky chimney—To prepare working drawings—To renovate a grandfather clock—To make garden furniture, arbours, arches, seats, summer-houses, tables, etc.—To use metal-drilling tools—To renovate mirrors—To upholster furniture in leather cloth—To mend broken china—To do fretwork—To build a boat—To make a canoe, etc.—To limewhite poultry-houses—To do gold-plating and silver-plating—To clean a watch—To mend keyless watches and ordinary watches—To distemper ceilings and walls—To make picture-frames and frame pictures—All about curtain-fittings—To make metal castings—To clean paint off glass—To fit up a motor workshop—To clean boilers—To fix an anthracite stove—To re-gild and restore picture-frames—How to use spanners—To make doors and windows draught-proof—To paint walls—To make a garden path—How to do nickel-plating—To cure noises in hot-water pipes—To clean and repair locks, etc., etc.

This is Sound Money-Saving Knowledge.

SEND TO-DAY FOR THE FREE BOOKLET, WHICH TELLS YOU MORE ABOUT **"THE AMATEUR MECHANIC,"** AND SHOWS SPECIMEN PAGES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

To the WAVERLEY BOOK CO., LTD. (Str. G. Dept.), 96, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Please send me without charge or obligation your Free Illustrated Booklet containing all particulars of "THE AMATEUR MECHANIC," also information of your offer to send the Complete Work for a nominal first payment, the balance to be paid by a few small monthly payments, after delivery.

NAME.....
(Send this Form or a Postcard.)

ADDRESS .....

Str. G., 1922.....

After their bath with LIFEBUOY, the children are in a sound and healthy sleep.

LIFEBUOY SOAP

prepares the way for Father Christmas.

AFTER their bath the children are quickly in Dreamland and Father Christmas leaves his tokens of good-will knowing the youngsters will appreciate his gifts to the full, because they will awaken radiant in health, and joyous in spirit. During the Christmas Festivities, when the children literally tumble over each other, at this party, and at that, their toilet with Lifebuoy Soap is a safeguard. Lifebuoy Soap leaves every pore of the skin antiseptically clean and protected.

For the Toilet.
For the Bath.
For the Shampoo.

LEVER BROTHERS LIMITED, PORT SUNLIGHT.

L 229—23

'ESS VIOTTO' WILL MAKE YOUR HANDS BEAUTIFUL 2'6 4'9 6'9 PER BOTTLE

'ESS VIOTTO' MAKES HANDS BEAUTIFUL 2'6 4'9 6'9 PER BOTTLE

OMAR KHAYYAM PERFUME

The Scent of a Persian Garden

Miss Courvoisier

TO GREET YOU

Miss Courvoisier is at once an ideal of feminine grace and an inspiration in the cult of beauty to every member of her sex.

However beautiful the woman, her charm will be enhanced by the use of Omar Khayyam—the superlatively delicate perfume that holds all the romance and allurement of the East.

3/6, 6/-, 10/6, 21/-, 40/- per bottle.

Of all Chemists and Stores.

H. BRONNLEY & CO., LTD., LONDON, W.3.

'ESS VIOTTO' MAKES HANDS BEAUTIFUL 2'6 4'9 6'9 PER BOTTLE

'ESS VIOTTO' WILL MAKE YOUR HANDS BEAUTIFUL 2'6 4'9 6'9 PER BOTTLE

The Grey Hair Problem

Solved by a New Discovery

The discovery of NUCTONE has solved the Grey Hair Problem.

NUCTONE acts on an entirely different principle from any other preparation by giving to the cells of the hair those pigments which Nature has ceased to supply, leaving the colour to come *gradually, permanently,* and *safely* through the action of light and air.

NUCTONE is guaranteed not to contain sulphur, lead, or any other injurious ingredient.

NUCTONE for Dark Hair. NUCTONE Eclaire for Blonde and Auburn shades. Price **6/6** per bottle; postage (inland) 6d. extra.

Obtainable from all leading Chemists, Hairdressers and Stores, including Harrods, Barkers, Whiteleys, and Army & Navy Stores, London; Lewis's, Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham.

Descriptive Folder post free from

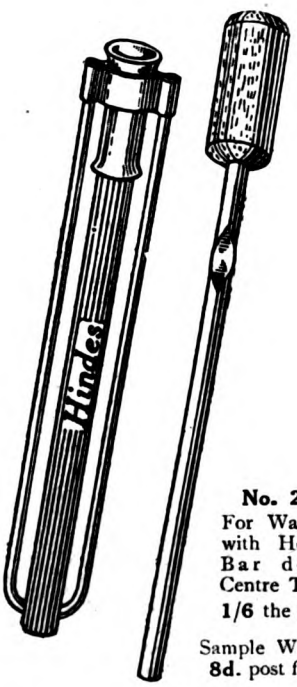
J. STEWART, LTD., 80, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1.

Dispel the dark with

PRICE'S

NIGHT LIGHTS

"Nature alone won't wave the Hair, Hinde's Wavers, too, must do their share."



No. 20.
For Waving, with Heated Bar down Centre Tube.
1/6 the Box.

Sample Waver, **8d.** post free.

Hinde's Hair Wavers in five different patterns are obtainable at all Stores, Hairdressers and Drapery Houses. Crude imitations which are hurtful to the hair may be sometimes offered. It is necessary to see that the name "Hinde's" is on each article. Hinde's Limited, Manufacturers of Hair Brushes and articles for the Dressing Table, 1, Tabernacle Street, London, E.C., and Metropolitan Works, Birmingham.

Send now for your ĀMÀMĪ Sample Casket

Most women know the luxurious fragrance of AMAMI SHAMPOOS. To introduce other AMAMI Specialities, we have prepared a sample Casket containing AMAMI PERFUME (as sold at 1/9), MANICURE STONE (as sold at 1/-), AMAMI SHAMPOO (as sold at 6d.), and dainty Sachets of CREAM, SOAP, POWDER (in three shades), AUBURN for Hair, BATH DUSTING POWDER, TALCUM, DENTIFRICE, CACHOUS, NAIL POWDER, and leaflets of AMAMI ROUGE. Also an intriguing book on BEAUTY CULTURE by MARIE D'ANJOU. Send 2/- P.O. (which covers postage) for Sample Box No. 25 to PRICHARD & CONSTANCE, Perfumers to H.M. The Queen and by Royal Appointment to H.M. the Queen of the Belgians, 57, Haymarket, London, S.W.

All AMAMI Specialities are obtainable in usual size packings from the better chemists and coiffeurs.

A.1

Skin Blemishes Quickly Banished

Nearly all disfigurements of the complexion are due to defective skin action, and are chiefly manifest as pimples, comedones (blackheads), &c.

WRIGHT'S COAL TAR OINTMENT

restores the sluggishly acting glands of the skin to activity more promptly and effectively than any other agent.

It possesses emollient properties that make it ideal for rough and tender skin, and it embodies all the hygienic and antiseptic properties of

WRIGHT'S COAL TAR SOAP.

Of all Chemists and Stores. In tins 1/3, in jars (triple size) 2/9. If any difficulty in obtaining write to Wright, Layman & Umney, Ltd., Southwark, S.E.1.

Don't neglect your Hair

USE

KOKO

for the HAIR

Has 35 Years Reputation.

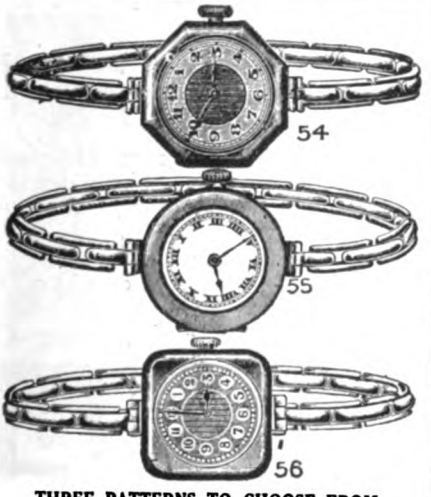
1/6, 3/- & 5/6 per bottle.

OF ALL CHEMISTS & STORES.

KOKO MARICOPAS Co., Ltd.,
16 Bevis Marks, London, E.C.3.

Quality Watch Bracelets

With finely jewelled Lever Movements.



THREE PATTERNS TO CHOOSE FROM.

Each watch is guaranteed to be precisely as described in this advertisement and bears a written warranty.

These beautiful watch bracelets, sold elsewhere at as much as 10 guineas, are now offered by the old-established firm of Chas. G. Frankland at below pre-war prices. They have stout, solid 9 ct. gold cases bearing the English Hall Mark, beautifully finished high grade lever movements, fully jewelled, compensated, adjusted, tested and timed, and are fitted with the famous Regent bracelet.

£5:5:0

SENT ON APPROVAL

Merely state the number of model required and the watch bracelet will be carefully packed and sent at Chas. G. Frankland's expense by registered post. Cash, or cheque crossed "Barclay's Bank, Holborn," with order. Money refunded if you are not entirely satisfied within seven days. All orders taken in rotation. Customers' post orders are given the same attention as personal visits.

Chas G. Frankland Estd 1878

335, HIGH HOLBORN,
LONDON, W.C.1.

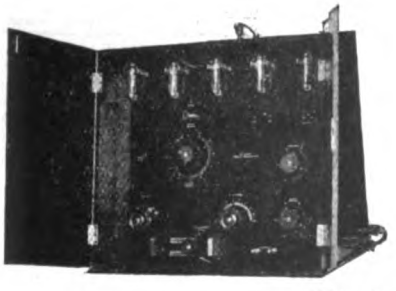
FAR FROM THE GREAT CITIES

YET IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE WORLD.

This is not contradictory when

MARCONI'S INVISIBLE MESSENGERS

are employed. The Globe is girdled by a chain of Long-range Radio Stations—Land, Sea and Air are united by the Wonders of Wireless.



THE KEY TO THE WORLD'S NEWS

is the

Marconi Scientific "Overseas" Receiver.

Write for Explanatory Booklet to—

THE MARCONI SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENT CO., Ltd.,

'Phone: Gerrard 7745 (Pvte. Bch. Ex.) **40, Dean Street, Soho, London, W.1.** Telegrams: "Themasinco, Westcent."

TO NOURISH AND STRENGTHEN POORLY DEVELOPED CHILDREN AND DELICATE YOUNG WOMEN

"MALTOLINE" rebuilds the tissues and is noted for restoring health.

"MALTOLINE" enriches the blood, strengthens the nerves and improves general health.

"MALTOLINE" has a remarkable effect on poorly developed Children and delicate Adults of all ages.

Reduced to
2/6 per bottle; double size 4/6

Children like it——Contains no Cod Liver Oil

Maltoline
TRADE MARK

Send Stamps 6d. for Trial Package post paid.
Prepared by The Maltine Manufacturing Co., Ltd. *(Estd. 1878.)*
9 (S) Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C.1.

Colds in the Chest

For this too common English ailment, great relief results from the external application of

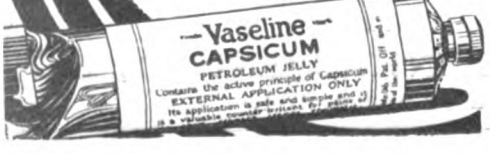
Trade **Vaseline** Mark
CAPSICUM
PETROLEUM JELLY

Better than a mustard plaster—safer and simpler to apply. Does not blister the skin.

Keep it as an emergency remedy in your household.

Your nearest chemist will supply you.

CHESEBROUGH MANUFACTURING CO., Consd., Willesden, London, N.W.10.



WOOD BROS.
MATERNITY WEAR

The "Lovat" 63/-

The Self-adjusting Regd. 'Maiturnus' Band
An inestimable boon to the expectant mother

Every skirt tailored by Wood Bros. is fitted with the **"Maiturnus" Band.** No alteration required; wonderful comfort afforded and perfectly normal appearance maintained. Coat Frocks, Costumes, Gowns, etc., also tailored to measure. New Catalogues, Patterns, and simple self-measurement forms free from Manageress. When ordering, give full present measurements. **Own material made up if desired. Full satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded.** Skirts 14/11; Gowns 52/6; Costumes 63/-; Accouchement Sets 14/11; Maternity Corsets 9/11; Maternity Belts 12/6; Complete Layettes 35/-. Carriage paid in Great Britain. Also EVERYTHING BABY WANTS FROM BIRTH. Illustrated catalogue post free from Manageress.

WOOD BROS., Ltd., (Maternity Wear Specialists), **14, St. Mary's St., MANCHESTER.**
THE ORIGINAL INVENTORS OF MATERNITY WEAR.

FOR HEADACHES & NEURALGIA

And when Neuralgia causes racking shocks, The simplest, safest, quickest cure is **ZOX.**

FREE TWO ZOX POWDERS free. Mention this Magazine, and enclose 1½d. stamped addressed envelope. Sold by Chemists and Stores in 1/3 and 3/- boxes, or post free at these prices from the proprietors.

ZOX
THE ZOX CO.,
11, HATTON GARDEN, LONDON, E.C.1.

COOPER'S

John Peel Brand

EMBROCATION

IMMEDIATELY ALLEVIATES ACHES, PAINS, STIFFNESS, RHEUMATISM and LUMBAGO

Cooper's is a creamy white, clean-handling preparation that rubs right in and quickly reaches the pain.

A user writes:

"Since my accident I have suffered from very severe periodical attacks of sciatica and rheumatism . . . . Your embrocation is everything that is claimed for it and more . . . . the first application gives relief."

YOUR CHEMIST SELLS IT.

For Household Use - - 2/-

For Animal Use - - 1/6 and 2/9

WILLIAM COOPER & NEPHEWS, LTD., BERKHAMSTED, HERTS.

BARGAINS IN IRISH LINEN HANDKERCHIEFS

Special Xmas Values.

We offer 4,000 dozen of Irish Linen Handkerchiefs of the finest and best quality at bargain prices. These lovely Handkerchiefs will wash and wear for many years, and always retain their bright, soft, silky sheen.

Extra fine quality Hemstitched Irish Linen Handkerchiefs.

Size 11 inches, 10/9 per dozen.
" 12 " 13/9 "
" 13 " 15 9 "
" 14 " 17/9 "
" 15 " 19/9 "

Ladies' Fine Sheer Linen Handkerchiefs, with extra fine embroidery in the corner, size 11 in., per doz., 18/9.

Ladies' Fine Sylkoline Handkerchiefs, lovely soft quality, narrow hemstitched hem, beautifully embroidered with any initial, size about 10in., per dozen, 10/9.

Ladies' Dainty Gossamer Handkerchiefs, pretty printed borders, slightly imperfect, per dozen, 2/11.

Children's Picture Handkerchiefs, per dozen, 1/11.

Our Guarantee *Any goods not approved can be returned to be exchanged or money refunded.*

For all orders under 20/- add 9d. for postage.

WRITE NOW FOR FREE CATALOGUE.

Hutton's

95, Main Street, LARNE, Ireland.

The Science of Beauty—1.

The Wonders of the Ultra-Microscope.

The search for Beauty is no longer blind—no longer a gamble. Science has changed all that.

Take, for example, the world-famed toilet cream—Icilma Cream—put it under an ordinary microscope.

What do we see?

Myriads of tiny white spots, each surrounded by a *film of Icilma Water*—the famous natural water from the Icilma spring in Northern Africa.

But look at just one of those tiny spots through the lenses of a *high-power* microscope.

It is a wonderful sight.

On a dark ground, hundreds of tiny specks of light glide hither and thither, never ceasing, never colliding—tiny stars and planets move with stately grace through a miniature sky.

What produces this wonderful harmony among the dancing atoms? Each particle, so small that it is no more than a formless speck of light, bears a tiny charge of electricity. That is why the atoms repel each other and never touch.

But if a foreign body comes into the field, the lights go out. Collision follows, and the electrical charge is expended in attacking the invader.

This is the reason why Icilma Cream is so beneficial in its action on the complexion. Every microscopic particle of the natural water is surcharged with power, stimulating the skin to health and beauty—the only form of beauty that is real and lasting.

Not every cream will reveal this—in fact, only one—the famous Icilma Cream, because nothing else is as good or can do as much for your skin and complexion.

Icilma Cream is deliciously foamy, delightfully fragrant, and vanishes better than vanishing creams. Ideal in *all* weathers.

Icilma Cream can be obtained at all good Chemists and Stores. Price 1/3 and 2/- per pot.

He approves the CUBE Tea pot

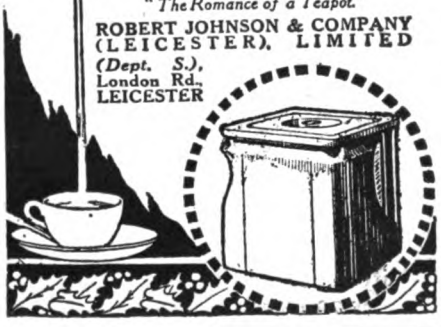
The old gentleman has a practical eye. . . and the "useful" gift was never more in favour than now. In the CUBE you have not merely a dainty gift but one which your friends will really welcome. Its snug self-contained features guarantee it against careless chipping, and it pours perfectly. In art patterns and self-colours from

3/- to 11/6

(postage extra).

Write for Free Booklet, "The Romance of a Teapot."

ROBERT JOHNSON & COMPANY (LEICESTER), LIMITED
(Dept. S.),
London Rd.,
LEICESTER



Wash-day Worries— Ended!

No more hard work, and the washing done in half the usual time. The old "tub and scrub" method is superseded by—

BRADFORD'S 'VOWEL' WASHER

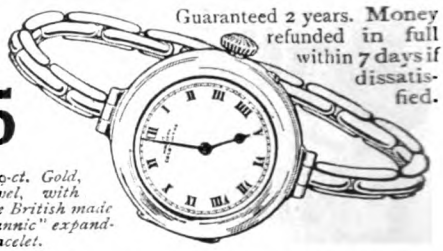
No internal mechanism. Will wash all kinds of Linen, Curtains, Blankets, etc. Easy in operation, and will last a lifetime.

Carriage Free to Railway Station. Special Discount.

BUTTER CHURNS, BUTTERWORKERS. LABOUR-SAVERS for the HOUSE. "Everything for the House and Dairy."

Write for Illustrated Catalogue (No. 999B).

THOS. BRADFORD & CO., Makers,
141-142, HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON.
130, Bold St., Liverpool; 1, Deansgate, Manchester.



Guaranteed 2 years. Money refunded in full within 7 days if dissatisfied.

£5

Solid 9-ct. Gold, 15 jewel, with genuine British made "Britannic" expanding Bracelet.

BUY YOUR WATCH from Britain's foremost Watchmakers.

Holders of the British Watch Record at Kew.

The Watch Case and every link of the Bracelet are solid 9-ct. Gold. Every Watch is adjusted to keep uniform time and is tested and regulated before sale.

The Bracelet bears the "Britannic" stamp, which is recognised as indicating the highest quality amongst expanding bracelets. Its springs are tested—will withstand long wear, and are practically unbreakable.

It is sincerely believed to be the best Watch Bracelet value in Great Britain

Before buying elsewhere write for our free catalogue of Watches for Ladies and Gentlemen.

The NORTHERN GOLDSMITHS Co.
No. 136, GOLDSMITHS' HALL, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, ENG.

The Ideal Xmas Gift to friends at home or abroad.

HAY'S PURE SCOTCH SHORTBREAD

Packed in the Tartan Tin.

Every cake guaranteed to be made with the finest ingredients, and the flavour is specially good. It's real Scotch Shortbread at its very best. Get a tin (or two) and give yourself and friends a special treat.

Post Free to any address in the British Isles.
1 tin 3/6, 2 tins 6/6, 3 tins 9/3.
Weight, 1 tin under 2 lbs.; 2 and 3 tins, under 5 lbs. Special quotations for wholesale orders.

WM. HAY & SON, Bakers, DUNDEE.

CROMESSOL

Keeps Disease Germs Away

The Fragrant Disinfectant.

XMAS PARTIES and similar functions can be safeguarded from disease germs by spraying the rooms with "CROMESSOL." Delightfully refreshing, bringing the fragrance of a flower garden into your home. Six times stronger than Carbolic, but will not stain or burn.

From leading Chemists, or direct **7/6** post free for complete outfit.

Money refunded if not satisfied.

CROMESSOL CO. (Dept. S), 323, Paisley Road West, GLASGOW.

GENUINE THERMOS FLASKS

from 5/- each. from 5/- each.

THERMOS articles do keep liquids hot for 24 hours, and icy-cold for days, and with care last a life-time. But to ensure satisfaction you must see the word THERMOS on the Flask. This is the trade-mark that spells satisfaction, and comfort to every purchaser.

THERMOS Jugs and Carafes are handsome articles and most useful in the household, keeping liquids either steaming hot or icy cold.

THERMOS Jars keep ice cream solid for hours, and are excellent for preserving butter and perishable foods in perfect condition.

EVERY THERMOS ARTICLE IS GUARANTEED.

FROM ALL CHEMISTS, IRONMONGERS AND STORES.

Catalogue on request from THERMOS, Ltd., 12/14, Denman St., Piccadilly Circus, London, W.1

AN XMAS GIFT TO INVESTORS

POCKET LEDGER

Size 6" x 4" sent free on receipt of postcard to

HARRY WHITELEY

Stock & Share Broker,

15, Figtree Lane, Sheffield.

Makes W.C. Bowls a spotless pride. Removing all disease-carrying deposit without labour, trouble, or danger. "Delighted with results" epitomises the many testimonials received. Get a 6½d. tin to-day. If your chemist, ironmonger, or grocer cannot supply send his name and address for

FREE SAMPLE to

Dept. 6V, HARPIC CO., 1, AVENUE ROAD, LONDON, S.E.5.

Making a Clean Job of it-

The BRIL-COMB fills a long-felt need-

The **Bril-Comb** provides the only means of getting Brilliantine, Hair tonics, etc., directly to the roots of the hair without making the hands intolerably greasy

The **Bril-Comb** is the clean way and makes a virtue of necessity, for it economises the use of hair tonics, and saves time and trouble as well.

The BRIL-COMB

Send for one to-day, securely packed and post free **6/6**. Colonial post 1/- extra. Wholesale and retail enquiries invited.

RICHFORD & Co.,

153, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

Grey hair

This pomade has stood the test of time

NUMEROUS and plausible are the remedies for grey hair, and it is no wonder that people who have tried some of them have little faith left.

MORGAN'S POMADE for grey hair has stood the test of actual use for over 35 years. From a small nucleus it has grown to be the basis of a great business, and many thousands of jars are sent out every week to all parts of the world.

This could not be possible if **MORGAN'S POMADE** did not actually perform what is claimed for it, namely, that a few applications will restore grey hair to its original colour, while occasional use will strengthen the hair and beautify it. Every reader whose hair is grey, dry or thin should purchase at once a 1/9 size. Obtainable from Boots, all Branches, Chemists, Hairdressers or Stores, or if any difficulty send direct enclosing 1/9, also 3d. for postage.

The MARIE ANTOINETTE Co.
18, St. John's Park, London, N.19.

Drive Out Acid Poison and Enrich Your Blood

Impure blood causes Eczema and Psoriasis with its terrible irritation, also Boils, Pimples, Abscesses, Ulcers, and most Skin Troubles.

Impoverished blood means lowered vitality, lack of strength and energy, and causes Anæmia, Nerve Troubles, Varicose Veins, etc.

You must not only CLEANSE but must also NOURISH your blood to cure. Hood's Medicine does both at one time, which accounts for its 50 years' record of success and over 40,000 grateful letters received in two years.

It is made from 14 Herbs, Barks and Roots, published on every bottle, and acts more like food than physic. It overcomes all ailments caused by blood trouble in the system.

Take Hood's and you will feel better, look better, eat better, do your work more easily, and be fit to resist prevalent diseases. Of Chemists, 2/6, 5/-, 8/6, Tablet or Liquid; or Six Days' Trial Tablets and Home Doctor Book, 160 pages (over 200 illnesses, rules for health, sickness, and diet fully explained), for 1/-, from HOOD'S (Dept. S.T.21), Cecil House, Holborn Viaduct, London.

HOOD'S MEDICINE.

Catarrh

Head Noises, Deafness, Bronchial Troubles, Hay Fever and Impaired Vision

Positively Cured by 'ACTINA'

No matter how long you have been suffering from any Catarrhal complaint, or how severe your case may be, you are assured instant relief and a positive cure by the 'ACTINA' method, which consists of the application of pungent vapours, so fatal to the above maladies, generated in a small unbreakable container.

We invite all who suffer from Catarrhal trouble of any kind to write TO-DAY for

Free Booklet and particulars of our Two Weeks' Trial Offer.

THE ACTINA COMPANY (Dept. 70),
Nelson Chambers,
52, High Street, Birmingham.

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Removes Skin Trouble.

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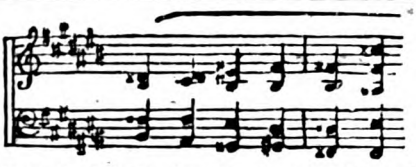

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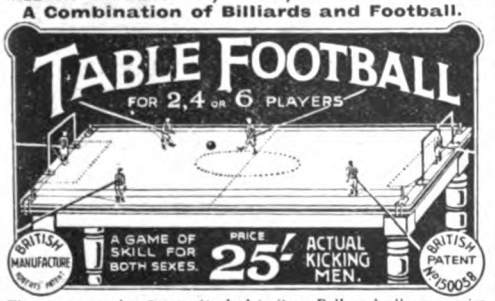

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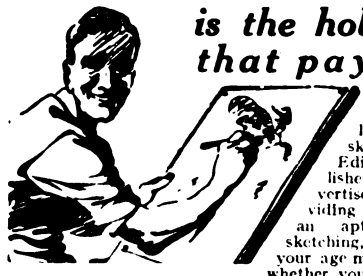

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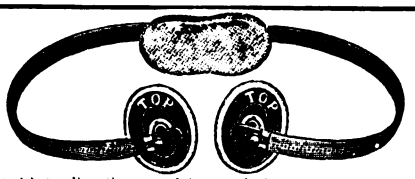

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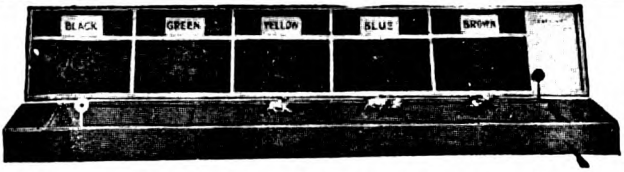

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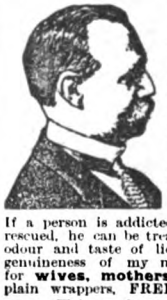

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Perhaps you have invited blood poison by hacking the top of that corn with a razor, or burnt it off with caustic paste, liquids, or plasters, soaked it in hot water, picked dubiously at it with your finger-nails and sprinkled it with various powders to stop the aching. After doing all this and waiting patiently for results, you either find that most of the corn has stayed right on duty through it all, or else a brand new top has sprouted up to replace the old one and the ache is still doing business at the old stand, worse than ever, and plus considerable extra soreness of raw skin around the corn. This is because you have only worried and irritated the top of the corn without at all affecting the little pointed part or core which is the real business end that causes all the pain by pressing on sensitive nerves. It would be as logical to cut the top off an aching tooth to stop the pain. It is only after all these time-wasting experiments with a corn, unpleasant as they are, that you are really ready to appreciate the marvellous way in which saltrated water acts and how totally different it is from anything else. It soon dissolves out the oil from dead, hardened, calloused, "corny" skin, leaving it soft and "mushy" as fresh putty, so that corns can easily be picked right out, root and all, whereas callouses turn white, curl up at the edges and come entirely off at one scrape with the dull edge of a knife. Sound healthy skin is not affected in any way by the water excepting that it is wonderfully refreshing to sore, tired, tender, aching feet. To prepare the *medicated* water, which is also *oxygenated*, invest a few pence in a supply of the Reudel Bath Saltrates compound which is obtainable from any chemist, this being the registered name by which physicians and chiropodists prescribe it. Use about a tablespoonful to a gallon of rather hot water and rest the feet in this, but first bid all your foot misery a final farewell, for such tortures will soon be only unpleasant memories of the past.

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(From a recent photograph)

I was born in 1852, and, just as my photograph shows, I now have a full growth of hair. Yet thirty years ago I found scurf upon my scalp, and my hair began to fall away, until after a while I was classed as a "bald-head."

Call it vanity if you will, it was displeasing to me to remain bald. Furthermore, I believe it is our birthright to have plenty of hair upon our heads.

Seeking a Hair Growth

It is scarcely necessary for me to state that in the hope of growing new hair I had experimented with one thing and another—the usual array of lotions, pomades, shampoos, etc.—without getting any benefit. At that age I looked older than I do now. Later, when I became a trader in the Indian Territory of U.S.A., some of the Cherokees jocosely called me "the white brother without a scalp-lock."

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I never saw a bald Cherokee Indian. Both braves and squaws almost invariably use tobacco, eat irregularly, frequently wear tight bands round their heads, and do other things which are commonly ascribed as causes of baldness. Yet they all possess beautiful hair. What, then, is their secret? Being on the spot—most of the time at Tahlequah—and upon very friendly terms, it was easy for me to gain information from the usually taciturn Cherokees. I learned exactly how American Indians grow long, luxuriant hair, avoiding baldness and eliminating scurf or dandruff.

(From a photo when bald)

My Hair Grew Again

Then I applied these secrets to myself, and my hair began to grow. There was no messing or trouble about it The new hairs emanated from my scalp as profusely as grass grows on a properly-kept lawn. I have had a plenitude of hair ever since.

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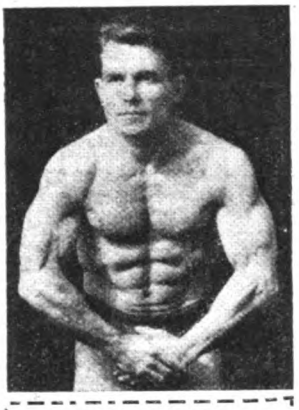

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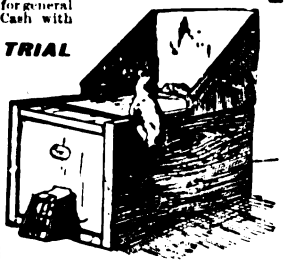

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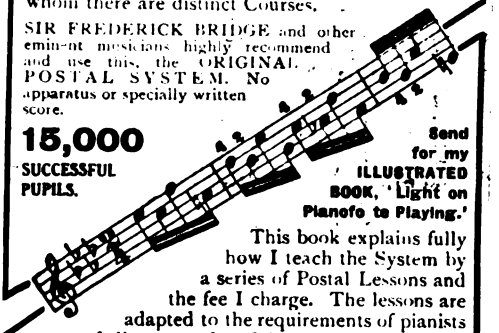

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